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A Precis

of a Study in the Writings of Martin Buber

with Special Reference to His Conception of Religion

and Human Relations

by

Arlin Rothauge

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Hasidism, a mid-eighteenth century mysticism of Polish Jewry, represents for Buber the heart of both Judaism and his personal way of being religious. In his essays on the Hasidim Buber sums up their faith and his neo-Hasidist theology best in the term "pansacramentalism." God is believed to be everywhere present in our immediate world, and hence by turning to Him in every moment we are able to live in an intimate, free, and reciprocal relationship with God. And all human existence is made sacred by this joining together of man and God in everyday life. Buber argues in Ich und Du that man encounters God only through that mode of our being referred to as "I-Thou." Our "Thou" might be a person, a part of nature, and what Buber calls Geistige Wesenheiten. Furthermore, any one of these "Thous" might become, so to speak, a sacrament through which we meet the eternal Thou. Surely many problems arise out of such an "I-Thou" theology, but we concentrate our critical attention on one, namely Buber's tendency to reject formal religion in favour of his rather mystical, individualistic relation to the eternal Thou. For him the Jewish laws and rituals seem to fall in the godless category of "I-It." Therefore, he affirms the supposedly non-ecclesiastical religion of Moses and the free prophets instead of official Judaism. He sees in Biblical Judaism a historical dialogue between Israel and their God. The history of faith in

the Bible, according to Buber, centres around the struggle to establish the kingship of God in the national life of Israel. The divine kingship would be expressed not by a priesthood and a religious establishment but by actualizing the love and justice of God in the daily life and national affairs of the elect people of God. Jewish life and Hebraic religion are only properly fulfilled when Israel simultaneously becomes a community of faith and a nation. The "I-Thou" philosophy and Buber's interpretation of Biblical Judaism are both closely linked to his Zionist and socialist line of thought. The socialist society that he envisages is established by the spiritual power of the "I-Thou" relation between men and with God. As opposed to the militant revolution advocated by the Marxists, Buber argues for a gradual social evolution towards true community. By community Buber means social relations based on spontaneity, mutuality, and trust rather than capitalistic exploitation and political power. He believes that the local communities would eventually federate into larger ones by means of purely voluntary association. The problems of trade and defence would be turned over to a restricted administration rather than a powerful, permanent State. Now, Buber views the theo-political experiment of Moses as the germ of true religious socialism. By identifying Biblical history with modern socialist theory Buber comes to the conclusion that both the destiny of man and the mission of the Jewish people are served by the development

of a socialist society in Israel.

Throughout Buber's writings we find him very confident in spontaneous association but distrustful of objectivity, formality, and permanency. In other words, order and freedom are set over against one another, and he tends to choose the latter. For Buber this priority involves disapproval of both government and organized religion. However, it seems that we might formulate a more balanced view that still takes the value of Buber's thought into account. Firstly, it is pointed out that "I-It" can be seen as an integral part of the "I-Thou" relation. Secondly, it is suggested that Geistige Wesenheiten, the third category of "I-Thou" relations, might be extended to include a just State and formal religion, i.e. liturgies, doctrines, and moral precepts. This accommodation of organized religion, however, does not imply the approval of authoritarian, doctrinarian principles, legalistic morality, and the perpetuation of outmoded rituals and irrelevant symbols.
It is my opinion that liberal-minded Protestants must join with Buber in upholding religious freedom and in advocating the unity of religion and daily life.

A Study in the Writings of Martin Buber with Special Reference to His Conception of Religion and Human Relations

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PREFACE

In order to gain an understanding of the essence of a philosopher's reflections, one must determine the central questions that most concern him. For Martin Buber the fundamental question seems to be about the relation between man and God. From that problem follow the other basic questions that he addresses in his writings: what is man, in particular, what does it mean to be a Jew, who is God, specifically, who is the God of the Jewish Bible and what is the relation between the Jews and their God? In the contemporary situation such questions all relate to the concerns of Zionism, i.e. the return to Palestine and the destiny of the Jewish people. In making these various queries there emerges in Buber's writings a particular religious ideal and a view of genuine human relations. His view of the ideal society and the ideal religion runs through the four major areas of interest represented in his writings: Hasidism, the I-Thou philosophy, Biblical Judaism, and Zionism which includes his Socialism. We will treat each division both as an independent unit and as an integral part of his over-all thought. Hence, the present study has three basic purposes: a survey of the wide scope of Buber's mature thought, a demonstration of the inner unity of the major areas of his concern, and an evaluation of his concept of religion and society.

Most of Buber's writings are available in good English translations upon which the following research confidently relies. It was necessary to return to the original German sources firstly when insights were required from early writings that have remained untranslated mainly because their content represents Buber's mature thought only in part. Secondly, the discussion refers to the original texts when particular German words and phrases are important to the line of argument. It should also be acknowledged that the material of chapter two is drawn largely from the excellent study of G. Scholem, Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism. Any current research into Buber's writings will be indebted as well to the earlier studies by Hans Kohn, R. Gregor Smith, Maurice S. Friedman, Malcolm L. Diamond, Arthur A. Cohen, and Paul E. Pfeutze. Yet the organization of this dissertation, its basic line of development, the clarification and formulation of Buber's philosophical anthropology and religious philosophy are, to my knowledge, original contributions to this field of study.

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PART ONE : A STUDY OF HASIDISM

CHAPTER I

AN INTRODUCTION TO MARTIN BUBER'S STUDY OF HASIDISM

With evident pride Buber states, "I am a Polish Jew." He continues by confessing that if he had lived in the period of classical Hasidism, he would certainly have become a Polish Hasid.[1] In the present study the term "Hasidism" refers to the movement characterized by a "realistic and active mysticism" founded under the leadership of a Polish Jew, Baal-Shem-Tov, in the mid-eighteenth century among the East European Jewry.[2] In order to appreciate the particular character of Buber's thought, it is necessary to become familiar with this relatively obscure Hasidist sect. Buber says, "Assuredly not my entire spiritual substance belongs to the world of the Hasidim . . . but my foundation is in that realm and my impulses are akin to it."[3] This acknowledgement surely justifies us in beginning a study of Martin Buber with a survey of Hasidism.

At the age of twenty-six Buber undertook an intensive study of Hasidist sources for five years, and this endeavour marks the beginning of his apologetic revival of Hasidist literature. In acknowledging the subjective nature of his restatement of Hasidism Buber explains :

> "I have told it (the Hasidist tradition) anew as one who was born later. I bear in me the blood and spirit of those who created it, and out of my blood and spirit it has become new. I stand in a chain of narrators, a link between links; I tell once again the old stories, and if they sound new, it is because the new already lay dormant in them when they were told for the first time."[4]

The publication of the writings relating to Hasidism is spread over nearly fifty years of Buber's life.[5] This tireless dedication to interpreting Hasidism for the contemporary world certainly testifies to his high esteem for the religious life of the early Hasidim. Although he would not become a twentieth-century Hasid, Buber felt compelled to bring the contribution of eighteenth-century Hasidism to the attention of our age.[6] What impresses Buber about early Polish Hasidism?

The mysticism of the Hasidist movement was attractive to Buber at first because of his interest in the German mystics from Meister Eckhart to Angelus Silesius. Jacob Boehme and Eckhart were the two most admired by Buber. However, following his later disillusionment with the ecstatic mood of mysticism, Buber concentrated his attention on the side of the Hasidist life and teachings that emphasise, infusing the routines of everyday life with "the breath of the Eternal."[7] Buber thinks that the word Hasidut can be translated into English best by a "verbal paraphrase: to love the world in God."[8] He claims that Hasidism is a unique type of mysticism which affirms the world as the reality between God and man, rather than as a hindrance

of spiritual development from which man must turn away in order to reach God. Further, the world mediates God's message to man and man's answering service to God."[9] Buber writes: "In the Hasidist message the separation between 'life in God' and 'life in the world,' the primal evil of all 'religion,' is overcome in genuine, concrete unity."[10] He looks upon classical Hasidism as one of the greatest movements in religious history because the Hasidist way of life does not divide into the common dichotomy of profane and sacred spheres. In his religious philosophy Buber emulates the Hasidist conviction regarding the union of everyday life and religion, and we will find that every area of his thought is affected directly or indirectly. The continual recurrence of the insight that true "life in God" means "life in the world" indicates the depth of Buber's respect for this quality of Hasidism. The present section on Hasidism discusses the background and meaning of the Hasidist "mystical piety" which transforms all man's everyday activity into holy living.

CHAPTER II

THE BACKGROUND OF HASIDISM

Classical Hasidism, the main subject of Buber's research, represents the culmination of an historical development which can be divided into four stages: the Zoharic or old Kabbalism, Lurianic or new Kabbalism, Sabbatianism and finally classical Hasidism. This development includes a period of Jewish messianism and the tradition of Jewish mysticism called *Kabbalah*. The Hasidist teachings continue to use the major concepts and vocabulary of the Zoharic *Kabbalah* and the Lurianic *Kabbalah*. Moreover, many aspects of the Hasidist movement are conditioned by the messianic movement of Sabbatianism. Hence, a survey of these developments is essential for placing Hasidism in historical setting and for understanding the implications of Hasidist teachings.[1]

For the purposes of the survey it will be adequate to begin with thirteenth-century Kabbalism and its theosophic concept of God. In the thirteenth century the Kabbalists were in contradiction with the Jewish scholastics, although recent scholars feel that Kabbalism arose from a deeper impetus than mere revolt against Jewish philosophy. In the Middle Ages, Jewish philosophy

was attempting a synthesis with Aristotelian philosophy. Since Aristotle explained the world by necessity, the law of cause and effect, and claimed that God is the impersonal First Cause, the Jewish philosophers under his influence tended to diminish the personal element of Jewish monotheism. In contrast to the God of Aristotle, the new God of Kabbalah was supposedly a return to the original, personal God of Israel. Although the Kabbalists of the Zohar[2] seemed to begin in harmony with the Old Testament and the mediaeval, Jewish philosophers, the Kabbalah of the Zohar expands into a Jewish theosophy and pantheism. The two tenets central to Zoharic thought are a personal God of creation and a God involved in personal, mystical relation with man. In the Kabbalah the God of philosophical Judaism is called the En-Sof, the infinite and unknowable God. According to Kabbalistic cosmogony the hidden En-Sof turns from inward repose to the emergence of creation in the form of Sefiroth, divine emanations or manifestations. In opposition to the views of Neoplatonism, these emanations are not gradations intervening between God and the universe. Each divine manifestation includes the former, and the total world of Sefiroth includes the whole universe. Further, in Kabbalism the world of Sefiroth is a process of pulsation within the divine life, hence the creation is an organism of divine, pulsating life. There are ten manifestations, and they disclose the mystical qualities of the hidden God, En-Sof. The last and

final manifestation is most directly related to man's concrete situation. It is called the Shekhinah, which means the holy Presence or Glory of God in our midst. The ten mystical manifestations of God can be known and expressed as symbols or names of the hidden God. However, the Divine Being Himself cannot be expressed. In the original, paradisical state of creation the divine life of the Creator is conceived as perfect order and harmony. Every Sefiroth and the many variations of each Sefiroth share in the perfect rhythm and unity of God's life. Because the Shekhinah is the final manifestation of God, the perfect order and unity of divine life constitutes "the union of God and the Shekhinah." However, Adam's sin, which symbolizes the sin of every man, disrupts the cosmic order, which concurrently destroys the divine harmony. The Kabbalists gradually came to call the divine disharmony, "the exile of the Shekhinah." The restoration of cosmic harmony is the essence of man's task in the world. In the Kabbalah the union of the Shekhinah and God is achieved by the religious acts of Israel, such as study of the Torah, mitzwoth, and prayer. Even the mundane acts of a righteous man affect a reconciliation of the divine life.

The Kabbalah that began with the thirteenth century came to a close with the end of the fourteenth century and the beginning of the fifteenth. Whereas Zoharic Kabbalism stressed theories

about creation and a return to the beginning of original cosmic harmony, the new Kabbalism introduced increased speculation concerning the historical era of final redemption, that is, Kabbalistic eschatology. The new development was encouraged by the catastrophic expulsion of the Jewish population from Spain in 1492. Some Kabbalistic writers had predicted that this tragic year would be the final year of redemption. However, the year of 1492 brought cruel exile rather than liberation. The circumstances stimulated the beginning of a period in which apocalyptic and messianic thought were to become increasingly prominent in the history of Kabbalah. About forty years after the exile from Spain the small town of Safed in Upper Galilee became the centre of the new Kabbalistic movement. The two most outstanding personalities of Safed were Moses ben Jacob Caradovero and Isaac Luria. Caradovero was a great systematic thinker, but Luria was a scholar with the personal magnetism of a popular leader and teacher. It is the Kabbalistic thought of Isaac Luria which directly affected the Sabbatian movement and the Hasidism of Baal-Shem-Tov.

The innovations of Lurianic Kabbalah entail a revision of cosmogony and further speculation about a messianic age of redemption. Isaac Luria exposes the contradiction between the monotheism of the Torah and the pantheism of the Kabbalah by the simple, perhaps crude, question, if God is everywhere, how could

God create a world, especially a world over against Himself? Luria gives his solution in the myth of tsimtsum. According to Luria, the first movement of the En-Sof is not emanation but contraction. God withdraws within himself, and this divine movement leaves a primordial space. Hence, the pulsations of divine life in the universe also include contraction or self-limitation. His manifestations of creation and revelation follow His contraction and fill the primordial space with unfolding rays of divine light. In Luria's theory there is a residue of divine light, Reshimu, left in the primordial space created by the contraction of the hidden God. The emanations of creative light were to establish order in the chaotic state of the residue; however, tragedy ensues. Adam Kadmon, the primordial man, is the first configuration of the emanating light, and the lights coming from his eyes are also chaotic lights which cause the Olam Ha-Tohu, "the world of confusion and disorder." Special vessels are emanated for the particular purpose of retaining the chaotic and isolated light. However, in the process of continuing emanation the divine light breaks forth with an impact which even the vessels are unable to withstand and they shatter. The Shevirath Ha-Kelim, "breaking of the vessels," represents the cosmic catastrophe which finally destroys the original harmony which is represented by the "union of the Shekhinah and God." For Luria, the primal source of the Kelipoth, the forces of evil, exists before "the breaking of the

vessels" in the residue. However, to prevent any dualism of good and evil within God, Lurianic Kabbalism later developed the view that the powers of evil arise from the scattered fragments of the vessels which fall into the lower abyss of the primordial space in which the spirit of evil dwells. The forces of evil enclose the shattered lights or divine sparks of God. Thus, the fallen universe constitutes the imprisonment of God's emanating and fragmented light in the "shells," forces of evil. The Diaspora, Jewish exile, was a terrible reality to the Jews of this age and the ancient Jewish symbol of the "exile of the Shekhinah" became the popular way to refer to the estrangement within creation and the Creator. The Kabbalists explain that the Shekhinah fell into exile when the vessels broke. Thus, the "exile of the Shekhinah" is more than a symbol, it is the tragic situation of divine life which is rectified by the religious deeds of the Jews. The Kabbalistic myth of creation explains the problematic circumstances which determine the necessity of redemption and the nature of final redemption. Furthermore, the Lurianic Kabbalah understands the restoration of the beginning as that end which will bring final redemption. For Luria the Messiah's coming is the culmination of the process of divine unification. Hence, the way of accomplishing the unification of God becomes the major concern of Luria's theosophical system. The means of restoring the original order and harmony of divine

life is based on devekuth, mystical communion with God, and kavvanah, the mystical concentration by which man directs his whole inner purpose towards accomplishing yihud, the unification of God.[3] Luria's school of Kabbalah elaborated the religious actions and prayers for kavvanah until they became a massive mechanical and magical function. The new Kabbalah of Isaac Luria was more appropriate for ascetics in a cloister than the masses in the street. However, he established an image of the Jew in exile that becomes the impetus for the popular movements of Sabbatianism and Hasidism. The Jew of the Diaspora is a man with the responsibility of restoring cosmic harmony for the sake of God and the exiled Shekhinah, with which the Jew could easily identify. Further, his spiritual actions possess the power not only of breaking the divine exile but also the power of preparing for the messianic age in which the historical exile of Israel would be ended. Thus, the Jew is not only a man of exile; he is a man of exile and redemption!

The messianic ferment in the Kabbalah of Luria reached a feverish climax in Eastern Jewry of Europe in the seventeenth century. In that century Polish Jewry suffered an incredibly violent persecution during the Cossack Wars. Cossack hordes lead by Bogdan Chielnicke invaded Poland and exterminated all the Jews they met on the way. The Cossacks equally hated the Polish landlords and the Jewish townsfolk who were often employed as stewards for the aristocracy. Polish Jews had been employed for

the unpopular task of representing the Polish landlords as overseers and tax collectors in the Cossack territoy of Southern Poland. However, historical circumstances never seem to justify the hate directed towards the Jew when he becomes the scapegoat of fanatical nationalism. In the massacres of the decade of 1648 to 1658 about seven hundred communities perished.[4] As the Jews of Poland began to long for a supernatural deliverance from the hell that their earthly life had become, messianic pretentions flourished and the highest expectations focused on Sabbatai Zevi whose popularity can be ascribed largely to the genius of his interpreter and propagandist, Nathan of Gaza.

Biographical information indicates that Sabbatai Zevi suffered from what psychiatry calls a manic-depressive psychosis. The manic-depressive patient does have normal periods which vary in length according to the extent of his pathological illness. During his psychotic periods he either suffers from severe depression and anxiety or from an abnormal sense of joy and release. Nathan of Gaza attempted to prove the Messiahship of Sabbatai Zevi by paralleling the psychotic sickness of Sabbatai with a scheme of Messiah's origin which coordinates with the cosmogony of the Lurianic Kabbalism. His apology follows a simplified version of Luria's teaching to the point of the "breaking of the vessels." For Nathan the cosmic accident becomes an even greater cosmic catastrophe than supposed by the Kabbalists because the soul of the

Messiah becomes dislodged and, like the particles of divine light, it also falls under the powers of evil. His soul had been embedded in the original divine light of En-Sof, but now the Messiah is imprisoned in the Kelipoth, the realm of evil powers. Hence, the Messiah must dwell in, and struggle against, all the forces of evil. He is able to free himself only by the strength of tikkun, which refers to man's effort in accomplishing cosmic harmony. Nathan's myth of the imprisonment of the Messiah in the realm of evil is applied to the two contradictory states of Sabbatai's manic-depressive condition. During the period of depression, Sabbatai is thought to be tormented by the forces of evil called the "evil serpents of the great abyss." In the jubilant periods of the psychotic cycle, the soul of this Messiah is supposedly released and receives supernatural "illumination." In "the state of exaltation" Sabbatai commits antinomian acts which Nathan also explains by the metaphysical life of the Messiah. In the supernatural power of his "illumination" Sabbatai enters into the forces of evil in the world and releases the inner holiness. In Sabbatianism the paradoxical "holy sin" becomes the central ritual. Antinomian acts of individuals and groups become sacramental and festive action which furthers the restoration of the exiled Shekhinah to God. Of course, if antinomianism is accepted as holy worship and holy living, the ultimate authority of the Torah is rejected.

Sabbatai Zevi proclaimed himself Messiah in 1666 and his disciples expected him to establish the new age in Palestine. However, while he was residing in Turkey, Sabbatai was threatened by the Islamic authorities. He was given the choice of submitting to Allah or possible death, and Sabbatai was converted to Islam. Upon hearing of the apostasy the hope of most Sabbatianists collapsed into total despair. Nevertheless, others interpreted the betrayal as the supreme "holy sin" of the Messiah. A radical group of Polish Sabbatianists lead by Jacob Frank even maintained that "holy sin" should be made a pattern of living and not just an occasional rite. Jacob Frank taught his followers to enter completely into sin in order to free the "holy lights or sparks" confined in the evil "shells." Hence, by "holy sin" the Frankists hoped to achieve the "unification of God," end the Diaspora, and establish the messianic age. The Frankists did more than violate the mitswoth, performance of holy deeds in response to the commandments of God. Frankism taught that in the messianic age the Torah must be "broken into pieces" and destroyed. Hence nothing remained of Sabbatianism but ethical nihilism. Jacob Frank proclaimed himself as a "holy Lord," and his close disciples seemed to feel he was the Messiah. The Frankist sect believed in a trinity of God, the Messiah, and the Shekhinah. In the Kabbalah the Shekhinah was referred to in feminine gender and was sometimes called "the Holy Lady." Dubnov, the Jewish-Russian historian,

mentions that there is record of a Frankist gathering at which the participants were dancing around a nude woman. He supposes that they were worshipping the Shekhinah, which was sympolised by the nude figure.[5] Nevertheless, the reputation of the Frankist sect justifies one in suspecting the presence of less honourable motives too. Following the pattern of Sabbatai Zevi, Jacob Frank and many of his followers became Catholics in 1759. Dubnov assures us that the apostasy of the Frankists was only for political advantages. They remained devoted to their "holy Lord," Jacob Frank, thus they were hypocrites as well as apostates. The Baal-Shem-Tov appeared on this disintegrated scene of Polish Jewry as a contemporary with Jacob Frank.

The Baal-Shem-Tov (1698-1760) was an unlearned villager born in Podolia on the old Polish-Turkish border. He proved himself to be a man of intense religious fervour and human insight. He gained the confidence and reverence of the common folk, drew to himself many followers, and established the movement called Hasidism. The historical Baal-Shem disappeared in the Hasidist legends of a great performer of miracles. Baal-Shem and most of the leaders of Hasidism have always been thought of as legendary figures shrouded in wonders and mystery. Buber has attempted to reconstruct an outline of Baal-Shem's life and teaching, as well as an account of his major successors. However, such efforts have been seriously limited by the fact that

Baal-Shem did not record his teaching. In 1815 two editions called Shevchei Ha-Besht, "The Praises of the Baal-Shem," appeared containing the oral tradition of Hasidism, but the material has little biographical or historical value.[6] We have only two letters which historians have accepted as authentic writings of the master. The Hasidist tales about Baal-Shem's life probably have some historical foundation, yet his biography is not particularly important. A few comments will be sufficient for the purpose of our study. The legendary accounts of his early life present a misunderstood man whom people judged as an ignoramus with no promise. His true identity always remained hidden. For instance, when serving in minor ecclesiastic positions, he pretended to sleep in the daytime, but at night, when all alone in the synagogue, he prayed fervently or pondered over the mysteries of the Kabbalah.[7] At the age of thirty-six Baal-Shem began his public ministry. He assumed a simplified version of Lurianic Kabbalah but revolted against the ascetic style of religious life. Baal-Shem-Tov accepted the people's longing for redemption which had been aroused by two pseudo-Messiahs, although he neutralized Messianism. Buber explains that the people were "lying fatally sick in the perversion of faith" and Baal-Shem-Tov found the "antidote" in the same sources from which the "poison" had come.[8] The Kabbalah had given new meaning to the ancient Judaic motif of exile and redemption. However, the Sabbatian movement had

only exploited the Kabbalah and destroyed the faith of Jews, but Hasidism changed the Kabbalah into an everyday way of life for the common man. From the elements of an apparently hopeless situation, Baal-Shem-Tov gave the Polish Jew new hope and renewed faith.

CHAPTER III

THE KABBALISTIC FEATURES OF HASIDISM

In discussing Buber's relation to Hasidism we have already noted that his contact with this religious movement is not limited to historical study. Certain aspects of Hasidism have been rejuvenated in his own personal faith. Hence, we can expect his presentation of Hasidism to contain many of his own ideas about religious life. The main purpose of this study in Hasidism is to understand better the thought of Martin Buber by examining his Hasidist concepts in their original setting of the Hasidist way of life. The material of the next two chapters will also provide background for comparison between Hasidism and the areas of Buber's thought which will be discussed in the other three major sections of the thesis. In discussing Buber's presentation of Hasidism there is no need to repeat the Kabbalistic foundations of Hasidism which have been summarized in the preceding chapter. Thus, our attention will centre on the modifications and the originality which made Hasidism a popular movement among the masses. The present chapter will deal firstly with the Hasidist doctrine of divine unification, then secondly with the Hasidist communion with God.

The Kabbalah had some currency among the masses, but Baal-Shem-Tov thoroughly popularizes the Kabbalistic doctrines of yihud and devekuth, the unification of God and communion with God. The conceptions are not merely extended to the common people; they are transmuted into common life. The popularised doctrine of divine unification is based on the cosmogony and eschatology of the Lurianic Kabbalah. The influence is clearly evident in the following excerpts which vividly portray the crisis of divine destiny in the world:

> "The divine spark in a stone or a plant or another creature is like a complete figure which sits in the middle of the thing as in a block, so that its hands and feet cannot stretch themselves and the head lies on the knees. He who is able to lift the holy spark leads this figure into freedom, and no setting free of captives is greater than this. It is as when a king's son is rescued from captivity and brought to his father."[1]

> "God has permitted His Shekhinah to enter into the process of history and to share the contradictions and sufferings of the world, and has sent His Shekhinah into exile with man and with Israel . . . He will not be reunited with His Shekhinah until we bring it to Him as a gift. With dusty and bleeding feet He permits His Shekhinah to tread the road of earth because we do not take pity upon it."[2]

Important concepts in such Hasidist teachings are obscured by the use of Kabbalistic symbols whose source and meaning are usually unfamiliar to modern ears. Hence, they erect an initial barrier for those who do not have the key to them. The following analysis will provide the key for a correct interpretation of the symbols.

In the popular sayings and tales which Buber retells for us, there seems to be a condensing of Kabbalistic symbols. The Hasidist teachings often make no significant distinction between the "divine sparks imprisoned in shells" and the "Shekhinah of God in earthly exile." Although translators have consistently used the terms "sparks" and "lights" with some justification, to the twentieth-century reader the words might suggest an atomized dispersion of God throughout creation. That is to say, a small portion of God resides in each entity and being, as if the world embodies innumerable divine spirits. However, the impression that the Hasidist teaching wants to convey differs a great deal from such a notion. The emphasis must be placed on the entire presence of one God in each and every entity of existence. The multiplicity of the divine presence refers only to the manifestation of God in the world. The true meaning becomes clearer if the term "divine sparks" is transliterated as "the immanence of God." In like manner, Buber suggests that the central symbol, "imprisoned sparks," means "the conditioned immanence" of the transcendent God.[3] The symbol "exiled Shekhinah," has essentially the same meaning. Buber apparently uses the word "conditioned" to express the Hasidist belief that the destiny of the divine Presence is subject to the conditions of nature and history. God suffers with his creation, and He depends upon man for mercy and for release from His earthly suffering. Therefore, these Kabbalistic and Hasidist symbols, "imprisoned sparks of God"

and "exiled Shekhinah of God," originally communicated the general view that God is everywhere present in the world, and the divine Presence is subject to a destiny of lonely wandering and suffering in the world. Moreover, Buber says, "The Kabbalistic view of God's fate in the world . . . crystallised itself . . . into the central idea of Hasidism."[4] Being in the tradition of the Kabbalah Hasidism dares to teach that the conditioned immanence of God awaits the help of man. Again, there is a condensing of symbols, hence both "reuniting the Shekhinah with God" and "uplifting or freeing the divine sparks from the shells" refer to human participation in the earthly destiny of divine life. Thus, God and man need each other. Man needs God as his Creator and Sustainer, and God needs man as His redeemer in the world. Buber explains that the motivation of the Hasidist life is "the secret, unfathomable value of human action" and "the principle of man's responsibility for God's fate in the world."[5]

In his early book, I and Thou, Martin Buber closely follows the Hasidist concept of God's destiny and His need of man. The Hasidim believe that their pious life is a necessary complement to the life of God. They maintain that divine life and human life are completely interdependent, hence God would be helpless without the holy Hasid. According to Buber, genuine Hasidism even teaches that the coming of the Messiah depends on man. Man must first hallow all of his immediate world and then the messianic age will come. Of course, it is also understood that man is always in need

of the divine Creator, Sustainer and Redeemer. In the statement of his own faith Martin Buber also expresses such convictions. He writes: "You need God in order to be, and God needs you for the very meaning of your life . . . We know unshakably in our hearts that there is a becoming of the God that is. The world is not divine sport, it is divine destiny."[6] By comparing Hasidism and these ideas of I and Thou, we realize that Buber is expressing a Hasidist conviction, but he has given new meaning to the concept of divine need. Buber says that God needs man's help in order to fulfil the divine purpose for human life. God depends on man for the redemption and fulfilment of the divine Will in human history. Buber says that man should pray, "Thy will be done," and mean, "through me whom Thou needest."[7] The influence of Hasidist thought upon Martin Buber becomes evident again in the similarity of the following quotations. Gershom Scholem correctly sums up the Hasidist view of God in the phrase: "All Being (is) in God, but not all Being (is) God."[8] Buber expresses the same idea in I and Thou with these words: "God comprises, but is not, the universe."[9] He also writes: "There is nothing in which He could not be found."[10] Buber's statement approximates the common Hasidist saying: "No place can be void of the Shekhinah."[11] The above statements about God raise an important question about both the Hasidim and Martin Buber. Is the Hasidist concept of God a pantheism? If the Hasidim are pantheists, then it follows that the similar position of Martin Buber is also pantheistic.

Let us begin our inquiry into the issue by consulting three of the early students of Hasidism, S.A. Horodesky, L.I. Newman and Jacob Minkin. These scholars attribute pantheistic leanings and doctrines to the Baal-Shem.

Newman has recently written an article saying that Baal-Shem's "interpretation of God was in strongly pantheistic terms."[12] Minkin says, "Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov was a pantheist without ever having heard of Spinoza."[13] However, Buber understands the Baal-Shem's position as a refutation of Spinoza without ever having known of him.[14] In presenting the position of Baal-Shem, Horodesky relates the phrase, "God is the place of the world and the world the place of God."[15] According to Buber's interpretation of Hasidism, "the world is not the place of God, rather, God is the place of the world, and He still dwells in it."[16] Although there is disagreement on whether Hasidism teaches ordinary pantheism, the conclusions of Buber and Scholem probably represent the most recent and competent research. Gershom Scholem suggests that the Hasidist interpretation of God be called "panentheism" because Hasidism does not equate God with the world, although it does teach a universal theophany. Because this seems to be Buber's point also, perhaps we should accept "panentheism" as the more correct designation for the position held by the Hasidim and Martin Buber.

The panentheism of the Hasidim forms an essential foundation for their doctrine of divine unification and their communion with

God. This point can be illustrated by the paradigm of eating in holiness, which is a popular example of the Hasidist concept of the supreme state of man. The paradigm shows the concrete, earthy quality of Hasidist mysticism. When a Hasid sits down to his meal, he is convinced that God "calls" to him both in his hunger and in the food set before him. The Shekhinah of God is "imprisoned" in the food as everywhere else. The Hasid believes that if he eats with reverence, with joy, and with his whole being directed toward God, then the simple act of eating becomes, firstly, a sacred communion with God and, secondly, a means of liberating the holy Shekhinah. Consumption of food is not merely an enjoyment permitted by God nor merely a practice for maintaining the physical health necessary for active service of God. Rather, Hasidism teaches that the act of eating a common meal in holiness becomes as holy a rite as eating the sacrifice in the Holy Temple. God is always our host and man is invited to be His guest. Hence, every meal, and any other daily activity, becomes an opportunity both to meet God and help God. It seems correct to say that in I and Thou, Buber sums up a part of Hasidism as well as his own thought when he refers to our role in creation as being "helpers and companions" of God.[17]

The paradigm of eating in holiness shows that in Hasidism, a popularized form is given to the Kabbalistic concept of devekuth as well as the doctrine of divine unification. According to Gershom Scholem, the Hasidist doctrine of devekuth is "the central

point on which Hasidism is focused and from which its special attitude can be developed."[18] Although Martin Buber has never made a similar explicit statement, nearly all his essays on Hasidism emphasize that a human-divine dialogue is basic to the life and teaching of Hasidism. As indicated previously, devekuth means communion with God. Buber feels that in Hasidism the communion between man and God is understood as the response of an "I" to his "Thou." This means that the Hasidist mystic concentrates fully on God, "adheres" to God, "cleaves" to God, directs his whole being to God; however, the Hasid does not seek to be absorbed in God. This Hasidist type of communion with God has both a cognitive and an emotive quality, but especially the latter. The Hasidist mystic "clings" to God with great joy, fervour, enthusiasm and dedication. It is a different type of devekuth based on cognitive concentration which appears throughout Kabbalistic literature. Moreover, the Kabbalists usually consider true communion with God to be attainable only in the highest stage of ascetic prayer. There is only infrequent speculation about the practice of communion with God in everyday life. The attitude of the Hasidim is quite different. Communion with God is placed in the midst of the common man's activity in the world. Living is praying. Of course, the Hasidim also have special times of prayer and worship in which their passions are often lifted into the state of hitlahavut, ecstasy. Hasidist sayings describe the impassioned experiences of such climatic

communion with many erotic symbols.[19] No more should be said about the ecstatic aspect of Hasidist life, if we want a picture of what Buber would consider genuine Hasidism. He only discusses the hitlahavut once in his exposition of Hasidism, and the reference appears in one of the first publications.[20] After his own disenchantment with ecstatic experiences he tends to diminish the place of emotionalism and ecstasy in Hasidism. Buber prefers to exalt the Hasidist life of a constant and reciprocal relationship with God, which God makes possible by His continual presence in man's immediate world.

This relationship with God demands a particular mode of living in the world as well as His presence in the world. Buber explains that the Hasidim experience their entire life in the world as a "sacrament" which mediates their communion with God, hence Buber calls the Hasidist way of life a "pansacramentalism."[21] The "sacrament" of daily experience mediates both God's "address" to the Hasidim and their "response" to God. Every action is a response to God because God is found to be everywhere. Nevertheless, God's demand in every new moment cannot be known beforehand. Hence, we can "prepare ourselves ever again for the deed, but we cannot prepare the deed itself."[22] Hasidism rejects the detailed requirements of rabbinical law and the mystical methodologies contained in the Kabbalah because these ways of responding to God deny a spontaneous "answer" to the unique demand of the over-

changing present. Furthermore, Hasidism takes a firm stand against the esoteric approach of the Kabbalah. Hasidism teaches that the "sacramental life" is possible even for the most simple and unlearned man.[23] For the learned Rabbi and the ascetic of Kabbalism human existence is either profane or holy. Religious observance and ascetic exercises are separate holy actions in a profane world. Buber argues that conventional religion often tries to create and preserve communion with God by selecting special experiences which are to be the "sacred places" and "sacred times" for a relationship between man and God. However, Buber thinks that the effort only creates an undesirable dichotomy of sacred and profane spheres in life. According to him, Hasidism corrects this mistake of conventional religion. Buber maintains that in the life of the Hasidim, the profane does not exist permanently because they believe that our entire life in the world is either already sacred or potentially sacred. There is no lasting dichotomy of sacredness and profaneness because the Hasid "hallows" his whole existence. In Hasidism and Modern Man, Buber says: "What is of greatest importance in Hasidism, to-day as then, is the powerful tendency, preserved in personal as well as in communal existence, to overcome the fundamental separation between the sacred and profane."[24]

In Buber's understanding of Hasidism, the secular life in the world becomes one with sacred life when the Hasid learns to

"love the world in God." The conception is well summed up in two of Buber's essays about Hasidism. In the essay, "Love of God and Neighbour," Buber writes:

> "For he (the Hasid) learns to love the God of the Universe, the God who loves His world, only in the measure in which he himself learns to love the world. Thus we may regard the way proceeding from love of men to love of God as being the decisive way for the development of the individual."[25]

Again, Buber writes in an essay of 1957, in which he sums up the essence of Hasidism as he has come to understand it in his fifty years of study: "Man cannot approach the divine by reaching beyond the human; he can approach Him only through becoming human. To be human is what he, this individual man, has been created for."[26] Thus, if a Hasid were asked, what does it mean to become a Hasid, according to Buber he would reply, it simply means being a true man by loving the world, especially our fellow men. This is the fundamental requirement that the Hasid must fulfil in order to achieve the unification of God and communion with God. We are certainly justified in doubting that Hasidism was always the earthy, worldly, and secular Judaism which emerges in Buber's presentation. However, it must be remembered that Buber purposely revives a selective image of ancient Hasidism, and this picture is important in the present study as a clue to Buber's conception of an adequate religious life in our contemporary world. Hence, it is important to notice that all other-worldly aspects of a religious orientation are reduced, and the religious

life of the Hasid is presented as being centred in the normal life of man in this present world. Buber is convinced that the Hasidist way of life attains a remarkable unity of "life in God" and daily "life in the world" because the Hasid believes that he meets God through his affirmation of the world. Hence, the Hasid is "open to the world, pious towards the world, and in love with the world."[27]

CHAPTER IV

THE RELATION OF THE HASIDIST COMMUNITY TO RABBINICAL JUDAISM AND SABBATIANISM

Thus far the analysis of Hasidism has dealt basically with the relation between the Hasidim and the Kabbalists, especially their doctrines of the unification of God and communion with God. Buber claims that Hasidism adopted the Kabbalistic cosmogony underlying these doctrines only because Baal-Shem had nothing better to offer in its place. Even if this opinion could be defended, there remains the historical fact that Hasidist teaching is obviously deeply indebted to the *Kabbalah* of Luria. By the time of Baal-Shem-Tov the Kabbalists had gained approval from many Jews. It was probably because of the close association with the *Kabbalah* that Hasidism was able to remain a sect within Judaism in spite of being ostracized from rabbinical circles. However, the modifications which have been examined in the previous chapter show that Hasidism attempted to break away from the ascetic, esoteric, gnostic, pantheistic and magic tendencies of the *Kabbalah*. Hasidism developed sufficient originality to make it a separate movement in Judaism rather than a new school of the *Kabbalah*.

Although we may speak of Hasidism as a movement or sect within Judaism, this does not mean that the Hasidim were welcomed by the leaders of traditional Judaism. Conflict with Rabbinical Judaism was predominant in the development of Hasidism. Because Rabbinical Judaism was the authoritative representative of the traditional Faith, the position of the new movement had to be defined against the background of rabbinical thought and practice. Bitter controversy arose between the Rabbin and the Hasidist leaders, firstly, because the Hasidist community had its own "Rabbi," the Zaddik, and the two religious leaders were naturally placed in the position of being competitors. Secondly, the Hasidim established their own place of worship apart from the synagogue. Thirdly, the Hasidim developed their own style of Jewish piety. Hence, the rabbinical circles viewed Hasidism as a threat to the authority of the orthodox Rabbi, the synagogue, and the Law. It is not surprising that the Hasidim were often looked upon as heretics. The Hasidist community brought further disrepute upon itself by associating with the Sabbatian heresy. The Sabbatian movement had gained many adherents in Polish Jewry, and during the early years of Hasidism extreme Sabbatian ideology was still being taught among the Polish masses by the Frankists. This means that many of the poor, ignorant, Jewish peasants tended to think like Sabbatians, although they may have forsaken the messianic movements long ago. The leaders of Hasidism were addressing the heart and

mind of such Polish Jews, hence they had to consider the Sabbatian ideas in order to help these Jews who had had their Jewish faith perverted by the pseudo-Messiahs. That is to say, in order to help these Polish Jews, they had to begin on their own religious level, which in many cases still involved Sabbatianism. Antinomianism and messianic leadership were two major features of Sabbatianism that the Hasidist community could not avoid. Hasidism did not accept either of these, but both features affected the style of Hasidist leadership and the nature of the Hasidist piety.

The present chapter has two basic purposes. Firstly, the chapter will discuss the nature of Hasidist piety and the style of Hasidist leadership as presented by Martin Buber. Secondly, and more important, my research has attempted to determine the Hasidist concepts of Buber's own thought, and then place these conceptions in their Hasidist context. In Chapter III this same approach showed that there are certainly good reasons why Buber says that his "foundation" and "impulses" are "akin" to Hasidism. It is hoped that the study of this chapter will give further support for Buber's claim.

(1) The Nature of Hasidist Piety

Both Sabbatianism and Hasidism continue the Kabbalistic understanding of good and evil. One Hasidist saying refers to evil as "the throne of the good."[1] Other Hasidist sayings refer

to evil as the lowest rung on the ladder leading to God.[2] Such sayings have their precedent in Kabbalism. In the Kabbalah and in Hasidism the nut is the most common metaphor concerning good and evil. The shell is compared to the evil forces, Kelipoth, and the kernel to the "holy sparks of God." Such sayings and symbols are intended to convey the ontological nature of good and evil. These two mysteries are separate and real forces but not dichotomous and equal realities. Good is identified with God, and evil is an incidental, provisional force which is subordinate to God. Further, evil can only exist in relation to good, specifically as a prelude to good. This ontology of good and evil is applied by Hasidism and Martin Buber to "an anthropological definition of good and evil." In expressing his views on good and evil in the treatise, Images of Good and Evil, Martin Buber clearly adopts and expands the Hasidist teaching on the "evil urge" and the "good urge."[3] As understood by Hasidism and Buber, evil is a real force in human nature, but the forces of human evil are believed to be readily redeemable by man himself. The Hasidist teachers and Buber argue that human evil begins with the "evil urge" which appears in our imagination in the form of temptation. The "evil urge" is opposite to man's "good urge," and the "evil urge" is basically an incomplete form of the elemental urges upon which the process of human life depends.[4] Thus, the "evil urge" needs only to be transformed into its potential usefulness. On the other hand, if man ever avoids or neglects the responsibility of transformation, the

"evil urge" brings about all forms of moral evil. Hence, it is man who is really responsible for making the "evil urge" result in evil behaviour. Buber thinks that these concepts have their earliest origin in the Talmud's doctrine of the two urges.[5] Hence, the Hasidist teaching on the "evil urge" possibly was not new in rabbinical thought. Moreover, the Hasidim and Martin Buber are in agreement with the Sabbatianists who say that one cannot serve God merely by avoiding evil. Hence, the Hasid does not repress his "evil urge," but he tries to "serve God with the evil urge."

In contrast to Hasidism, the Sabbatianists teach nothing about transforming the "evil urge." Rather, Sabbatai Zevi allows "evil urges" to become "evil deeds" which he glorifies as holy rites. Jacob Frank even exalts the "evil deed" to the position of the highest form of religious life. The Hasid cannot imagine that God wishes man to commit "holy sin." That ethical nihilism is rejected. However, the position of the Hasidim and Martin Buber is still very daring. If it happens to be true, as some religions maintain it is, that each man varies in his ability to transform his urges, and some men are helpless before certain inner forces, then these persons can better handle such elemental urges by avoiding or suppressing them. For such persons the way of the courageous Hasid could lead only to despair and increased guilt. In Israel and the World Buber acknowledges the possibility of suppression but, unfortunately, he completely rejects this alternative in favour of the more novel position of Hasidism. In

the same discussion he rightly denounces the heathenism which glorifies the elemental urges by proclaiming them sacred before they are transformed into holiness.[6] However, it seems unnecessary for Buber to discount also the attempt to conquer or suppress the elemental urges. Conquering the "evil urge" still can be accepted as a secondary alternative, even if hallowing the "evil urge" is being attempted as the most desirable approach to our elemental urges.

Closer attention needs to be given to what Hasidism means by the "evil urge" and the transforming or hallowing of the "evil urge." In Buber's own writings and in his interpretations of Hasidism, he presents the nature of the "evil urge" as a directionless, chaotic state of the elemental urges of man. While suffering from the directionless whirl of elemental urges, Buber says man is a microcosm of the Olam Ha-Tohu, which is the Kabbalistic term for "the upper worlds of confusion and disorder." Buber compares his days of youth to the Olam Ha-Tohu, and in Images of Good and Evil he suggests that everyone can understand what he means by "lack of direction" when they recall "the storm of adolescence."[7] He explains that when our elemental urges are in confusion we are apt to treat any aspect of our world as merely an object to be exploited and destroyed. The chaos inside of man is the fundamental cause of the chaos throughout the society within which man lives. According to

Buber, man may "slide" into a disorderly relation to the world simply by failing to discipline his "evil urge." On the other hand, after unintentionally doing a misdeed, man may deliberately choose to continue doing the evil deed, hence the behaviour becomes part of him. These possibilities are what Buber calls "the two stages of evil." In his interpretation the first situation corresponds to the Hebraic myth of the first family's "fall" and the second, "radical evil," is expressed in the Persian myth of Yima's "fall". Buber says that the alternative to both "stages of evil" is what he calls "direction." He also interprets Hasidism as teaching that "direction" redeems man's "fallen state." The concept of "direction" has a long and complicated development in Buber's thought.[8] Perhaps a definition for "direction" can be deduced from the following passages. In I and Thou Buber expresses himself like a Hasidist sage when he writes: "He who 'serves God with the evil impulse' (or urge) makes decision, decides the event."[9] In Images of Good and Evil he explains that one "serves God with the evil urge" by uniting it with the "good urge," and the "good urge" is "pure direction."[10] In Israel and the World, Buber says that if man is "determined to give direction" to the "evil urge" then he "lends it the full force of his will."[11] Because Buber places "direction" in opposition to evil and chaos, we may conclude that "direction" involves orderliness, and from the above quotations, it seems that the order is achieved by the human will.

Therefore, let us assume that the fundamental quality of "direction" is the order, harmony and purpose given man's "directionless" forces, i.e. "evil urge," by human decision and determination. Buber explains that all the diverse decisions of orderly, purposeful living combine to form every man's "one direction." The "one direction" can be understood both as one's unique individuality and as one's unique way of living with God.[12] Therefore, as understood by Buber, Hasidism rejects the extremes of both antinomianism and the usual response of mysticism towards man's "alien thoughts" and "wayward impulses." The Hasid remains the mystic whose highest aim is an intimate relationship with God, but he does not renounce the world and he does not repress his natural impulses. Neither does he indulge and exploit these two dimensions of human existence. The Hasidist mystic realizes his constant relationship with God by sanctifying "the external and internal reality of earthly being."[13] Thus, we see that the Hasidist unity of religion and daily life includes all possible aspects of human existence in the world.

The Hasidist sect did more than reject the antinomianism of the Sabbatianists. The Hasidim attained an exceedingly high level of Jewish piety. Their name, Hasid, means "pious one." The piety of the Hasidim differs from the usual "observing Jew" because it is a mystical piety and a radical piety. Buber writes, Hasidism is "mysticism become ethos."[14]

Of course, he refers to the Kabbalistic mysticism, which Hasidism modifies but always retains. For instance, Baal-Shem admonishes men to be careful in how they use their tools because the "holy sparks of God" dwell in them. Again, a tavern keeper must serve even the worst of beggars with love and care because a "holy spark of God" dwells within him. Hasidism insists on increasing the quality of Jewish piety and the sincerity of formal worship. In contrast to the legalism of eighteenth-century rabbinical law, the ethical teachings of Hasidism emphasize an inwardness and radical quality which is very much like the teachings of primitive Christianity.[15]

In Hasidism strict observance of the law is no longer the final goal of Jewish piety. The commandments of the Torah and rabbinical law are considered aids only for the situations in which they apply. The orthodox Jews opposed this Hasidist position because they believed it denied the ultimate authority of the Jewish Law and the role of the Rabbi. However, while the Torah is no longer central in Hasidist life, it is not violated as in Sabbatianism. Rather, the Torah receives the same reverence as it does in Kabbalism, and above all, the Torah is thought to be fulfilled by Hasidist piety. For this reason when a rabbinical scholar becomes a Hasid, the centre of his previous life is relegated to a minor role. In the view of Hasidism, the righteousness of the Hasid must surely exceed the righteousness of the orthodox Rabbi and the common "observing Jew."

The ethical teachings of Hasidism emphasize themes that are common in the prophets and in Christian teachings. God is thought of as a merciful and compassionate Being against whom men can even render judgment, if He happens to afflict them heartlessly. Nevertheless, in human suffering and divine judgment the Hasid still feels he is upheld by the grace of God. Furthermore, the loving God wills that men live in imitation of His infinite love. Hence, Hasidist ethics stress a reverent and active love for God which is expressed in brotherly love and benevolence toward all men, friend or enemy. The goal of their ethical living is to worship God by serving all men with attitudes of brotherly love, humility and joy. Love, humility and joy could be called the three cardinal virtues of Hasidist ethics. Moreover, the leaders of the Hasidim discourage prolonged guilt feelings over failure to love the neighbour and to be humble before the neighbour because the sorrow of guilt forfeits joy.

The reforms of Hasidism included Jewish worship and education as well as Jewish ethics. The Hasidim felt that the rabbinical Judaism of the Diaspora provided nothing but an endless burden of injunctions, regulations and a tepid, formalistic worship. Hence, the Hasidim dared to challenge the accepted, rabbinical authority of their neighbourhoods, and they established new patterns of worship based on emotionalism, enthusiasm, very earnest praying and the exhortations of simple men who usually had no rabbinical training. They met together

in special houses of worship, and shouts of spontaneous prayer, rapturous dancing, and mysterious homily were not uncommon practices. The children of Hasidist homes were trained by the leaders of the Hasidist community, while other Jewish children were educated by the Rabbi at the synagogue. The Hasidist teachers emphasized the development of character rather than gaining knowledge of Jewish law and tradition.

The life and teaching of Hasidism placed exceedingly high expectations on the despairing Jew of the Diaspora. Hasidism demanded that the East European Jew respond to the degeneration and discouragement of his social and historical circumstances with positive religious attitudes and actions. The mystical and radical piety of Hasidism required a strenuous religious discipline. As an isolated individual, the Hasid could never have mastered the challenge. He needed the aid of strong leadership and a supporting community. The messianic movements of Sabbatai Zevi and Jacob Frank had offered a supposedly supernatural leader and the strength of mass enthusiasm, but the pseudo-Messiahs totally failed the people and shattered their hopes. Thus, the bewildered Jewish peasant was in even greater need of a strong leader. Many simple Jews would not turn to the orthodox Rabbi in their need because the learned Rabbi seemed distant, unhelpful, perhaps even forbidding. The leadership of the Hasidist movement had a quite different image. The movement offered the confused Jews of Poland a new type of religious community which was structured

around a very persuasive and passionate leader, the Zaddik, of which Israel Baal-Shem-Tov was the first.

(2) The Style of Hasidist Leadership

The Zaddikim were the exemplars and pastors of the Hasidim. "Zaddik" means "the righteous one." The Hasidim said they learned the Torah from every movement of their Zaddik because the Zaddik literally embodied the Torah. It was the function of the Zaddikim to inspire and instruct the Hasidim, to share their griefs and sufferings, and encourage them when they faltered in their faith. Buber feels that the essence of the Hasidist community was "reciprocal action."[16] He means that the Zaddik and the Hasidim in his charge formed a community engaged in genuine dialogue. The Zaddik was the central personality of three circles of reciprocal fellowship in which the pastoral love of the Zaddik was extended and emulated.[17]

The first and broadest circles encompassed the many who came to the Zaddik from a distance, especially on the religious holidays, to ask help for their bodily and spiritual needs. The second, middle circle included those who lived in the vicinity of the Zaddik. The Zaddik lived and worked among these Hasidim. He ministered to them in the market place, in their homes, and in the Hasidist house of worship. The third, narrowest circle was that of the disciples, of whom several were usually taken into the household of the Zaddik for training in the Hasidist tradition. Buber maintains that the relationships of this

Hasidist community had the authentic quality of dialogue. It seems reasonable to suppose that the quality of the Hasidist community was a source of inspiration for Buber's philosophy of dialogue.

The Zaddikim were always the exalted leaders of the community who mediated between God and the community. However, Buber claims that genuine Hasidism resisted any traces of quasi-messianic leadership because the "Zaddikim pointed men with great seriousness to that immediate relationship with God that no mediation can replace."[18] No single Zaddik was elevated over others. They believed that each Zaddik and the Hasidim in his charge had been brought together by divine providence, but a genuine Zaddik allowed no idolatrous worship of the kind demanded by the messianic figures. Many of the Hasidim and their leaders continued to hope for the coming of the Messiah. The traditional hope of Judaism was not forsaken, yet Hasidist teaching insisted that when the Messiah does come he will be a "hidden Messiah." Hence, if any man says he is a Messiah, you know assuredly that he is not the Messiah.

Buber also emphasizes that the early Zaddikim despised the practices of ascetism and esoteric brotherhoods. The Zaddik lived "his life in the work and with the world" and the pattern "belongs to the innermost core of his relation of faith."[19] The early Hasidist movement was "a communal mode of holy life in the world" which was communicated and sustained by the life of

the Zaddikim. Actual living in a new faith was primary. Hasidist teachings arose later as attempts to put the Hasidist way of life into conceptual form. Buber says :

> "In an otherwise not very productive century, even in Eastern Europe, the 'unenlightened' Polish and Ukrainian Jewry brought forth the greatest phenomenon in the history of the spirit, greater than any individual genius in art and in thought: a society that lives by its faith." 20

Critical students of European history and Hasidism will no doubt assure us that Martin Buber is exaggerating the significance of Hasidism in "the history of the spirit." Israel J. Kazis, Rabbi of Temple Mishkan Tefila of Boston, Mass., is one such critic. The rabbi has dismissed the contemporary revival of interest in Hasidism as only a "romantic idealization oftentimes to the point of extravagance." Rabbi Kazis says that a "neo-mystical orientation has, in large measure, been induced through the influence of Martin Buber's literary work in this field during the past half century."[21] He continues his criticism by suggesting that Buber's evaluation of Hasidism is frequently expressed in unjustified "superlative terms." The above statement concerning the place of Hasidism in the "history of the spirit" illustrates the type of exaggerated appraisal to which Rabbi Kazis objects. In contrast to Buber, the late Professor Louis Ginzberg held that, with the exception of "the doctrines of the Habad, other forms of Hasidism . . . represent the acme of systematic cant and irrational talk."[22] Nevertheless, in spite of

the fact that there are scholars who differ from Martin Buber, it is highly significant that he should find so much to praise in the Hasidist life and teachings. Buber's evaluations indicate his conception of the essential pattern of a model religious life. The introductory chapter of this study in Hasidism emphasized his appreciation for the Hasidist unity of religious faith and everyday life. The above quotation again expressed his admiration for this quality of Hasidism. According to Martin Buber, the Zaddik and the Hasidim form a community of religious men who experience "life in God" through their everyday "life in the world." In Buber's estimation no other way of life is worthy of being called genuine religion.

Summary and Conclusion:

This study in Hasidism began with Buber's extraordinary claim that, if he had lived in the time of Baal-Shem, he would have become a Polish Hasid because his own "foundation is in that realm" and his "impulses" are "akin" to Hasidism. Now, what does Buber mean? To what aspects of Hasidism and himself does Buber refer? On the basis of the present study we may conclude that Martin Buber's Hasidist foundation centres about two major features of the Hasidist way of life. Firstly, the Hasidim believe that their religious life consists of a direct relationship with God in which the divine partner and the human parther need each other. Secondly, the Hasidim understand their dialogue with God to be maintained by loving the world and

hallowing all human experience. In one of his essays on Hasidism, Martin Buber sums up the Hasidist message in the words: "Bound to the world, receiving and acting, man stands directly before God, not 'man', but rather, this particular man, you, I." He, then, continues by confessing:

> "This very teaching of man's being bound with the world in the sight of God . . . was the one element through which Hasidism so overpoweringly entered into my life. I early had a premonition, indeed, no matter how I resisted it, that I was inescapably destined to love the world."[23]

I think these words should be understood as Martin Buber's personal acknowledgement of the essence of his Hasidist foundation and impulses. This common ground is reflected in the spirit of Buber's faith in at least two ways. Firstly, he also highly values an everyday spirituality with directness, spontaneity, informality and earnestness. Buber has the same rebellious and independent attitude towards traditional Jewish education, worship and ethics. He is not satisfied with the character of the piety and prayer found in the synagogue because it does not bear the mark of true religiousness in his mind. The Hasidim sought to achieve that exceedingly difficult spirituality in which man remains in constant relation to God. Thus the instruction of God, the moral demand of God, and communion with God are moment by moment occurrences in the everyday world. It is this type of spiritual adventure that Buber probably recognized in his own "impulses." Secondly, mankind enjoys a very high status in the Weltanschauung of the Hasidim

and Martin Buber. Both reject the suprahistorical, divine Messiah who is expected by Jewish Orthodoxy and proclaimed by Christianity and the Jewish messianic sects. The Christians and Jewish believers might ask, how can you think that redemption could be consumated in this sinful world by such a fallen creature as man? Being committed to this world and man, the Hasidim and Buber simply believe that their weakness will be overcome by mutual support and by the God who is present and working with them in the redemption of the world. Thus they place complete faith in the common man's capacity to realize divine grace and wholeness in himself and his immediate world, and they remain undaunted in the courage, optimism and determination of their messianic work.

PART TWO : THE I-THOU PHILOSOPHY

CHAPTER V

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE DIALOGICAL PRINCIPLE

Part one, "A Study of Hasidism," gave an impression of the East European influence upon the thought of Martin Buber. His intense interest in the Hasidist sect continued through his whole life, and the mood of Hasidism is present in all his work. As R. Gregor Smith says, "It is not too much to say that the legends and teachings of Hasidism provide the substance and the style for all Buber's work."[1] M. Friedman also rightly concludes that "Hasidism is the most important single influence on the development of Buber's philosophy."[2] Hence, it is important always to have Hasidism in mind when we read Buber's work. But if we are to gain further understanding of Martin Buber, the study of his relation to this Jewish movement should be balanced by viewing his involvement in the problems of contemporary western philosophy. In his philosophical work Buber has achieved a synthesis of the spirit of the *Haskala* (Jewish Enlightenment) and Hasidism. It was necessary for him as a Jewish scholar of the "Jewish cultural renaissance" to be interested in these two great movements which have revolutionized Judaism since the eighteenth century. At its outset the rational *Haskala* turned naturally to the philosophy of

western Europe for its inspiration and looked with contempt on the superstitious and emotional Hasidism. In the same way Hasidism found in the sceptical and intellectual Haskala an even greater opponent than traditional Rabbianism.[3] Martin Buber is to be commended for reconciling in his personal faith and scholarly pursuits these two historical movements which usually had been contradictory. Buber thus stands out in the academic world as being an accomplished student of both Hasidism and western philosophy.

In 1898 Martin Buber began his study of Philosophy in Vienna, and in 1923 he became a teacher of the philosophy of religion at the University of Frankfurt. He also taught social philosophy from 1938 to 1951 at Hebrew University. Hence, he was associated with European philosophy from the very beginning of his university education and his career as an academic philosopher. Buber's thought has obviously been influenced by several philosophers of western Europe, such as Kant, Spinoza, Pascal, Hegel, Feurbach, Heidegger, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Scheler, and the social philosophers, Wilhelm Dilthey, George Simmel, and Gustav Landauer. In a most significant study entitled "What is Man?"[4] Buber demonstrates a thorough grasp of these and other western philosophers, and in this essay he accentuates the issue within western philosophy which most interests him, i.e. the nature of man and society. Martin Buber's name will appear in the history of western thought as one who devoted himself to the task of taking a new look at that enduring and perplexing question, what is man?

Perhaps it can be said that contemporary philosophy on the Continent has become characterized by its quest for an answer to the question of man's nature and destiny. Buber thinks that Scheler expresses clearly the situation in our time from which a philosophical study of man starts; Buber quotes Scheler's statement:

> "We are the first epoch in which man has become fully and thoroughly 'problematic' to himself; in which he no longer knows what he essentially is, but at the same time also knows that he does not know."[5]

A large portion of Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy should be viewed as a vital contribution to modern man's struggle for an adequate understanding of himself. Buber has referred to this major concern in his thought as "the philosophical science of man, which includes anthropology and sociology."[6] He goes on to explain that "the philosophical science of man must take as its starting-point the consideration of this subject, 'man with man'" or to use a more common but less precise phrase, personal relationships. Buber hopes that the new "philosophical science of man" will formulate "the knowledge which will help to bring about the genuine person again and to establish the genuine community."[7]

Before turning to a review of the I-Thou philosophy, we might give attention to some of the information we have about the development of the dialogical principle in Buber's early thought. It seems that the decisive importance of the conception of I and Thou first came to Buber's attention through Ludwig Feuerbach who said in 1843: "True dialectic is not a monologue of the solitary

thinker with himself, it is a dialogue with I and Thou."[8] Buber also quotes the following statement made by Feuerbach:

> "The individual man for himself does not have a man's being in himself, either as a moral being or a thinking being. Man's being is contained only in community, in the unity of man with man—a unity which rests, however, only on the reality of the difference between I and Thou."[9]

Buber comments:

> "In those words Feuerbach introduced that discovery of the Thou, which has been called 'the Copernican revolution' of modern thought, and 'an elemental happening which is just as rich in consequences as the idealist discovery of the I' and 'is bound to lead to a new beginning of European thought, pointing beyond the Cartesian contribution to modern philosophy.' I myself in my youth was given a decisive impetus by Feuerbach."[10]

That impetus gradually becomes more manifest in the first decade of this century. In his essay on Boehme in 1901 Buber writes that Boehme's dialectic of the reciprocal conditioning of things finds its completion in Ludwig Feuerbach's statement: "Man with man—the unity of I and Thou—is God."[11] In "Lesser Ury" (1903) Buber writes: "The most personal lies in the relation to the other. Join a being to all beings and you lure out of it its truest individuality."[12] It was in 1904 that Buber began his intensive study and reconstruction of the Hasidist literature. And in the _Nachwort_ of _Das Dialogische Prinzip_ Buber recalls that from approximately 1905, when the Hasidist tradition became the foundation of his thought, one particular question has been the innermost one for him. In his words, it is "the question of the possibility and reality of a dialogical relation between man and God, hence a free partnership of man in a dialogue between heaven and

earth."[13] As we have noted above, the terminology of I and Thou can be found quite early in Buber's writings, but in the Nachwort he says that the actual dialogical principle appears for the first time in the fall of 1907 in Die Legende des Baalschem. Here Buber says that "the legend (of Baal-Shem) is the myth of I and Thou, of the caller and the called, the finite which enters into the infinite and the infinite which has need of the finite." In the Legend of Baal-Shem Buber still writes as a mystic, and the first section of the book is devoted to a discussion of Hitlahavut, which means the "burning," the ardour of ecstasy. Buber even says, "Hitlahavut unlocks the meaning of life."[15] However, in the decade to follow his view of ecstatic experience gradually changes to one of distrust and disillusionment. Already in Daniel (1913) Buber affirms the contradictions and insecurity of life as well as the inner serenity and unity of mystical experiences. That tendency was reinforced in 1914 by what was for him a very painful experience. In the late autumn of that year a young man came for counsel, and it happened that Buber had been absorbed all morning in what he calls "religious enthusiasm". Nevertheless, he listened and conversed with the visitor in a friendly spirit. When Buber heard some time later that the man had died in the war, he realized that his visitor had wanted someone to share his hidden distress and to show him the meaning of life rather than merely extend a friendly hand. Having been so involved in his own religiosity Buber had

failed to discern and meet the real need of the young man.

In looking back upon this event Buber says:

> "Since then I have given up the 'religious' which is nothing but the exception, extraction, exaltation, ecstasy; or it has given me up. I possess nothing but the everyday out of which I am never taken. The mystery is no longer disclosed, it has escaped or it has made its dwelling here where everything happens as it happens. I know no fulness but each mortal hour's fulness of claim and responsibility."16

In Daniel Buber formulates three perspectives that later, when adapted, become fundamental features of the I-Thou philosophy. Firstly, he observes that man has a twofold relation to the world: realization and orientation. Realization is a direct, intense experience of the world with our whole being. Orientation does not require the participation of our whole being because we only look upon the world as so many objects that may be named, arranged, and controlled. Secondly, Buber explains that there is a dialectical relation between these two modes of life in the world. Although realization provides life with its meaning, it is a rare, impermanent state of being, hence we always return to the life of orientation. However, rather than despise our necessary involvement in orientation, we should include it as a dependent and subservient function of the life of realization. Buber argues that our age is in grave danger of being overcome by orientation alone. Consequently the destiny of our civilization rests with the men of realization, the true power of the human spirit.[17] Thirdly, Buber suggests that man experiences the divine through

realization as opposed to orientation, which is godless.[18]
It might be added here that the concept of the realization of God in the world was the central theme of his early theology. However, he found that the phrasing of the idea was problematic because it suggested that God is a creation of man. But Buber believes in a divine being that is becoming rather than a divine process summoned into existence by man and the evolution of the universe. In the _Vorrede_ of _Reden über das Judentum_ Buber explains that in his mind "to realize" means to prepare the world and ourselves for the presence of God's reality.[19] In 1950 this theological concept was reaffirmed and identified by Buber as a basically Hasidist belief.[20]

The philosophy of realization clearly moves in the direction of the mature I-Thou philosophy. Yet before the dialogical principle could take full form in Buber's thought one decisive step was necessary. The image of the man of realization - an idea that bears the subjectivity of mysticism - had to be clearly superseded by the concept of a constant dialogue between man and God in the world. By 1917, with the publication of _Ereignisse und Begegnungen_, Buber's reflections and experiences had brought him to the threshold of the dialogical way of thinking. In an essay of this book, "Mit einem Monisten," the man of realization is replaced by the "loving man" who encounters reality over against him and seeks to woo a response from it but does not seek a mystical unity with the world. Hence, Buber claims in that

essay that he is no longer a mystic in his life and thought.[21] Buber tells us in retrospect that the first draft of Ich and Du was sketched in 1916.[22] He says:

> "A vision which had come to me again and again since my youth, and which had been clouded over again and again, had now reached steady clarity . . . . Some time after I had received the right word as well, and could write the book again in its final form."[23]

That short but profound, pungent book appeared in 1923. But Buber was not the only European who was thinking along those lines. Gabriel Marcel says:

> "By a striking coincidence, I discovered the particular reality of the 'Thou' at approximately the same time Buber was writing this book. His name was quite unknown to me, moreover, as were the names of Ferdinand Ebner and Franz Rosenzweig, who appear to have preceded us on this path."[24]

Rosenzweig's Star of Redemption was completed in February, 1919, and in the same year Ferdinand Ebner wrote his "pneumatological fragments" which he collected in the book The Word and Spiritual Realities (1921). Buber reports that he had not read either of these books prior to the point at which his own dialogical thinking took on its final form.[25] Because these men came to similar positions independently and contemporaneously, it seems reasonable to suggest that the I-Thou philosophy might be the outcome of a development in the history of philosophy and a reaction to our impersonal, technological society. Now, the emergence of the I-Thou philosophy was not limited to the Continent. A very similar philosophical point of view has been developed

independently by the distinguished British philosopher, John Macmurray. Chapters six and seven include a comparative study of Martin Buber and John Macmurray. As well as giving a concise, carefully organized treatment of "philosophical anthropology," Macmurray has made his own original contributions to the subject. Macmurray's writings contain certain ideas by which we can amplify Buber's views and even extend his line of argument. Many more preliminary remarks could be made about the history and variety of dialogical thinking, but we proceed instead to the discussion of this type of philosophy as presented by Buber and Macmurray.

CHAPTER VI

THE MEANING OF I-THOU AND I-IT

Anyone having knowledge of German grammar knows that this language retains a valuable distinction between forms of address that is virtually lost in ordinary English. We address others with the one word "you" while the Germans have the option of three words, Sie, ihr, and du. Sie is the polite form used in formal circumstances. The du-form and ihr-form reveal close friendship or relationship, and they are reserved for situations in which one has a very specific reason for using a familiar form. The du-form is used in prayer, to address a close relative or close friend, a child under about fourteen years of age, and a pet of which one is very fond. The ihr-form, of course, is used if more than one person is being addressed. Now, it is important to recall this feature of the German language to our minds because Buber has exploited it to the fullest extent in expressing the heart of his I-Thou philosophy. By entitling his book, Ich and Du, the reader immediately knows that he is basically thinking about a very personal relationship either between two persons or between a person and some being to which he has drawn very close. For a person who is acquainted with liturgical literature in German the phrase, Ich and Du, will also suggest that the user might be

referring to a worshipful and personal communion with God. All these ideas which are inherent in the German phrase are fundamental to the I-Thou philosophy. The English phrase, I and You, would fail to imply that the user meant only a very close relationship, and it would not have a religious connotation. Professor R. Gregor Smith has wisely translated the German word Du as Thou because the subtle distinction of older English is brought to mind, and we still use that form of familiar address in prayers. However, we can fully appreciate Buber's choice of terms only by remembering the German equivalent when we use the English phrase, I and Thou relationship. The other Grundwort, Ich-Es, is easily translated I-it without any loss of meaning.

Martin Buber's symbol, "I-It," represents the traditional distinction of subject and object; however, he expands the meaning of these familiar terms. He recognizes that the subjective and objective forms of "I think" extend into our participation in the world, that is, our "I do." We can become mere subjects and reduce the world to a mere object through our intentions and our resulting actions in the world that Buber calls "the primary speaking of I-It."[1] Buber says that as a subject man uses and experiences his whole world as many objects, inanimate objects, organic objects, and human objects. The objects we use and experience are defined by comparison with other similar or adjacent objects in a continuum of space. In the continuum of time the duration of objects is recognized, perhaps regulated, by the clock and calendar.

The human subject establishes contact with an object by such activities as, contemplating, observing, feeling, exploring, describing, categorizing, producing, etc. These are only a few of the many ways the human subject, i.e. the "I" of "I-It," experiences and uses any particular, "he, she, or it" as merely another object in the world. The "world of It" includes our mental and emotional faculties, all social institutions, the methods of science, and the vast technology of industry. In Buber's estimation our modern civilization is predominantly an increasing world of It. Buber presents the world of It as a necessary but an inadequate, at times even undesirable, side of human development and life. He pointedly remarks, "Without 'It' man cannot live. But he who lives with 'It' alone is not a man."[2] As a human subject who uses and experiences objects man is incomplete, but what is lacking? Buber would reply, "The very foundation of human nature is lacking." What, then, is the foundation of human nature?

John Macmurray would answer the question by saying, "The unit of personal existence is not the individual, but two persons in personal relation. . . . The unity of the personal is not the 'I' but the 'You and I.'"[3] This is also the basic premise of Martin Buber's philosophy of man. In a very similar statement he says, "The fundamental fact of human existence is man with man." He goes on to explain that although "the sphere of the between" is realized by men in very different degrees, "it is the primal

category of human reality."[4] The fundamental quality of "the sphere of the between", i.e. the I and Thou relationship between two persons, is a mutuality and reciprocity, which Buber calls "address and response Hence, "the primary word I-Thou" is also referred to as "dialogue". Dialogue happens between two persons who are addressing each other and responding to each other with their "whole being." Each person gives the other his entire attention: all else is excluded from consideration in the duration of dialogue. Neither person attempts to hide any aspect of himself from the other partner in dialogue. They are open to each other, honest with each other, and fully trust each other.[5] Through such total openness and attention the persons in the dialogical relationship are able to achieve maximum understanding and empathy with each other. Each person is able to see and feel life from the other's position. This full "making present," as Buber calls it, is realized when the other person's joys and sorrows seem as if they were our own.[6] Furthermore, Buber maintains:

> "The other becomes present not merely in the imagination or feeling, but in the depths of one's substance . . . . The two participate in one another's lives in every fact, not physically, but ontically."[7]

Such closeness demands integrity and respect for the other person's right to his own individuality because in the intense togetherness of the dialogical relationship the two partners profoundly influence each other. Each person must be satisfied

with sharing himself and his personal truth, then he must do no more than allow his influence to be assimilated or rejected according to the independent judgment of the other person.[8] As we become aware of the differences between ourselves and our partner in dialogue, we recognize that our personal existence is independent of others while remaining dependent upon others. Thus, personal relationships disclose that we are a person with a separate identity as well as a person who needs other people in order to be fully human. However, in contrast to Kierkegaard, Sartre, and Heidegger who claim that being an authentic man is being an "individual," both Buber and Macmurray argue that individuality does not express man's true nature unless it is included in his becoming a person through dialogical relationships. We truly accept and confirm one another only when our personal relationships include both individuality and mutuality.[9]

Martin Buber and John Macmurray agree that personal relationships begin from birth. Moreover, they claim that the personal relationship called "I and Thou, or You and I," remains central in the emergence and development of human personality. In accordance with their new point of departure in thinking about man, these two philosophers disagree with the older view that human development begins with the gradual emergence of a thinking subject who is finally able to differentiate a personal object, and who then attempts a relationship which never completely overcomes

the inherent gulf between two rational beings. The new approach of Buber and Macmurray assumes that a personal unity with the entire world is a given fact of the infant's existence. John Macmurray forthrightly asserts that the infant is a person sharing in a personal relationship with the mother from the very beginning. The child is not an "animal" who becomes basically a rational being, as the Aristotelian theory suggests.[10] Buber claims that the infant is born with "the instinct to make everything into Thou."[11] This "inborn Thou," as he calls it, motivates the infant to establish personal relationships with the world from the very beginning. Thus, from the moment of birth man is a relational being, although he might not be a fully rational being, and it is relationship which constitutes our essential nature as man. Buber considers it necessary to make one qualification in this line of argument. He says that although the child speaks the primary word "Thou before it learns to say I, on the height of personal existence one must be truly able to say I in order to know the mystery of the Thou in its whole truth."[12] Hence, the simpler, innocent more naive "saying of Thou" by an infant or a primitive man, who both have the same relational capacity in Buber's view, is less complex and complete than the genuine personal relationship of an adult in a highly developed civilization. Buber differentiates between these two stages of I-Thou relationship with the terms, "primitive Thou" and "essential Thou."[13]

In the personal relationships, which constitute human life from infancy, the world is not man's object but what both philosophers call "the Other." It is the Other which becomes our Thou in the personal relationships called "I and Thou" by Buber and "You and I" in the writings of Macmurray. Martin Buber observes that our relationship with the Other originates with, and depends upon, a "primal setting at a distance."[14] By this Buber means that man is able to withdraw himself from the world and recognize the world for itself. Hence, Buber says that man lets the world exist as "an independent opposite," and only as an independent opposite can man enter into relationship with the world as the "Other over against him."[15] Moreover, Buber understands the two acts, setting the world at a distance and entering into relation with the world, as a binary rhythm in which one act presupposes the other. It is Buber's judgment that the animal does not perceive the world as existing for itself, and hence the animal cannot know the state of personal relationship. As far as the animal is concerned it is like "a fruit in its skin."[16] The animal only responds to that immediate aspect of the world which meets his immediate needs. Thus, from Martin Buber's point of view, a human being is unique because only man approaches the world as an independent Other with which he attempts to establish a personal relationship. Buber claims that this quality of human life means that man is more than a special category, man is a "special way of being."[17]

Thus far the discussion has made no distinction between the world and the personal Other. Buber and Macmurray suspect that the infant and young child fail to make this distinction, but an adult knows that there is a definite difference between a human being and a stone. This raises the question, how do we finally differentiate a non-personal Other from the original personal Other? How do we become aware of the distinctiveness of the material world? The answer must be given from the point of view upon which Buber and Macmurray have established their philosophy of man. Buber says that in the appearance and passing of personal relationships the infant and child become increasingly aware of an "unchanging partner," that is, of his personal selfhood. The new self, then, proclaims the world as his object, hence the "primary word of I-It" is spoken, and personal unity with the world is broken.[18] Buber here explains the process as an act of selfhood which alters our apprehension of the Other. At this point Macmurray's analysis becomes a helpful complement to the work of Martin Buber because Macmurray tries to understand what happens to our apprehension of the Other. He explains that the personal Other becomes known as non-personal Otherness

> "only by a reduction of the concept of the Other which excludes part of its definition; only, that is to say, by partial negation: only by down-grading the 'You' in the 'You and I' to the status of 'It' . . . Now what is excluded in this abstraction is intention . . . . The non-personal is that which, in action, is always means and never agent."[19]

Thus, our "discrimination of the Other" is a process of reduction, negation and exclusion in our relation with the Other. Macmurray goes on to explain that beyond our separation of the world into persons and material objects we also form a third category of Otherness. The third type of Otherness we may call organic life or animate objects. Macmurray also observes that we gradually learn there are three different ways of acting which are appropriate to these three different types of Otherness. Firstly, I and Thou, or You and I, is the appropriate mode of relationship between people. Macmurray insists that when we must act towards a person as if they were only an organism or an object, such conduct must be a secondary and subordinate aspect of our total relationship with that person. He finds that in human life our personal relationships are "a positive which include, subordinate and are constituted through their own negative," that negative being impersonal activity between the two persons. Thus, "the form of the personal" applies to the connection between personal and impersonal behaviour as well as the connection between action and thought.[20] Secondly, the mode of behaviour which is appropriate between persons is inappropriate in our dealings with things, thus we no longer attempt a personal relation with stones, trees, flowers, celestial bodies, etc. Macmurray seems to think it is right and natural that "we look upon the world as a stock of

material which we can use, or a set of processes of which we can take advantage in the pursuit of our ends."[21] Macmurray also says, "Art (used in its broadest sense) is concerned with the exhibition of values, and, therefore, in relation to action, with the choice of ends."[22] Hence, according to Macmurray, our participation in the material world and our experience with art are basically impersonal and are primarily directed towards determining ends and means for human action. Thirdly, our way of relating to organisms stands midway between personal relationships and our impersonal manner of dealing with objects. However, Macmurray observes that although human conduct towards domesticated animals often approximates an attempted personal relationship, even the highest animal cannot respond as a person. He frankly states:

> "When we deal with the natural world, whether at the organic or the inorganic level, there is no necessary reciprocity in the relationship. We do not have to come to an agreement with out object. We need only to know what it can be used for and how to use it."[23]

In Macmurray's view, the world of personal, reciprocal relationship is the necessary property of humankind alone.

Martin Buber's approach to the above problem, i.e. the nature of our relation to the Other, is much different. While Macmurray suggests that there are three ways of relating to three types of Otherness, Buber speaks of two alternative ways of relating to the general Otherness of the world. Buber argues that all Otherness is our potential Thou. In his estimation the

personal relationship of two persons is undoubtedly the only complete expression of I and Thou relations, but he also insists that a "saying of Thou" is possible and necessary with all nature and _die geistigen Wesenheiten_.[24] Buber has used two similar metaphors to express the comparative status of the three spheres, human life, nature, and art-form, in which the world of relation arises. In _I and Thou_ (1923) Buber calls the I-Thou relationships between men the "main portal," and our relations with nature and art are two "side-gates" which lead into the reality of I and Thou. He explains that of "the three spheres, one, our life with men, is marked out . . . . Only here does the primary word go backwards and forwards in the same form."[25] In the _Postscript_ added to _I and Thou_ in 1957 Buber speaks of our relation with spiritual forms, _die geistigen Wesenheiten_, as "the sphere above the threshold" of mutuality; our relation with animal life is called "the threshold of mutuality"; and our relation with inorganic nature is referred to as the "pre-threshold" of mutuality. When discussing the I-Thou relationships between man, Buber says, "We are no longer concerned with the threshold, the preliminal and the superliminal of mutuality, but with mutuality itself as the door into our existence."[26] This later metaphor does not seem to imply, as the earlier did, that we have direct access to the full reality of I and Thou through our relation to nature and art. In the _Postscript_ these spheres are pictured only as parts of one entrance way rather than

entrances themselves. Now, we must try next to determine the point of refinement in Buber's thought which this change in imagery reflects.

Buber anticipates that his view of our relation to nature and spiritual forms will raise a crucial question in the mind of the reader. In I and Thou Buber questions: "But with what right do we draw what lies outside speech into relation with the world of the primary word?"[27] In the Postscript the first and main question which Buber asks on behalf of his critics is essentially the same question:

> "If, as the book says, we can stand in the I-Thou relationship not merely with other men, but also with beings and things which come to meet us in nature, what is it that makes the real difference between the two relationships? Or, more closely, if the I-Thou relationship requires a mutual action which in fact embraces both the I and the Thou, how may the relation to something in nature be understood as such a relationship? More precisely still, if we are to assume that we are granted a kind of mutuality by beings and things in nature as well, which we meet as our Thou, what is then the character of this reciprocity and what justification have we for using this fundamental concept in order to describe it."[28]

These questions which Buber poses define the problem quite sharply. We might expect Buber to defend the claim that there is a fully reciprocal I-Thou relationship possible in our association with the material world as well as in our creation and appreciation of artistic forms. However, the fuller explanation which Buber offers following these questions does not necessarily lead his reader to such a concise conclusion.

His response to these questions seems to indicate that there is a difference between I-Thou relationships among men and our relation to nature and art. In fact, it could be misleading to even speak of man's reciprocal relationship with nature and spiritual forms. Let us firstly review what Buber says about our relation to the material world.

In order to give Buber's remarks a setting we might observe that inorganic mass certainly forces itself upon us, and man continually exerts his will upon the natural world. In a sense, man creates a world by his perception and alternation of it. But this does not necessarily mean that reciporcity exists in man's enjoyment of, and deliberate conquest of, the arbitrary forces of nature. For instance, a man may be overwhelmed by the presence of a beautiful tree, and he may respond to the tree with deep appreciation, but the tree will remain completely indifferent and unresponsive. Hence, a circularity of response is absent. The man responds to the tree but not the tree to the man. Buber would agree with these observations but he argues that

> "this does not mean that here we are given simply no reciprocity at all. The deed or attitude of an individual being is certainly not to be found here, but there is a reciprocity of the being itself, a reciprocity which is nothing but being in its course (seiend)."[29]

When he speaks of "a reciprocity of the being itself," Buber might be making a metaphysical statement about the nature of Reality.

If this is the case, then we could try to place his idea in the framework of metaphysics, particularly Whiteheadian metaphysics. Alfred North Whitehead argues that on the ontological level of our existence all entities are interrelated. Whenever there is a change in a tree or even a distant star, that change ultimately effects a change in all other entities of creation. Hence, Whitehead views the world as a metaphysical process in which the nature of any given entity is always relative to the nature of all other entities. However, Whitehead thinks of this mutuality as an objective matter, that is, I-It rather than I-Thou. Furthermore, Whitehead describes this interrelation as a universal and continuous event between all entities rather than only an occasional relationship between man and nature.[30] Hence, Whiteheadian metaphysics do not give much support to Buber's view of a possible reciprocity between men and all non-personal entities. However, Buber is most likely pointing to a personal experience of some kind rather than making a metaphysical statement. And it is possible that Buber is misleading us by suggesting that, in his view, there is a reciprocity between man and nature. Buber rejects the notion of a tree responding to us or of the tree "saying Thou" to us. He says, "It is part of our concept of a plant that it cannot react to our action towards it: it cannot 'respond'."[31] On the other hand, he does emphasize our "saying Thou" to the tree. Buber explains that the "sayer of Thou" is open to the "unity and wholeness" of the tree, and he makes the

tree "present" to himself.[32] Hence, it appears that Buber is basically thinking about our personal response to nature and not a mutual relationship with material objects.

In the case of domesticated animals we might be able to recognize some mutual response. As an example, when the family dog is petted it may wag its tail and try to lick the hand passing over its body. However, both Macmurray and Buber admit that we cannot assume the dog is "saying Thou" to us. Buber says in the Postscript to I and Thou that the twofoldness of I-It and I-Thou is at most only latent in the highest animals and is non-existent in forms of life below animals.[33] Hence, both wild and tame animals are probably responding to a mere stimulus rather than a particular person as its Thou. Even a dog's loyalty to one master may only be a habit and not a "saying of Thou." By acknowledging that the I-Thou relationship is only latent in animals, Buber seems to admit that even a limited mutuality between master and pet does not mean that the reality of I and Thou has become manifest. In fact, Buber does not claim that there is a mutual relationship between man and animals. Indeed, he indicates this is improbable by calling our association with animals "the threshold of mutuality." He only speaks of "our saying of Thou out towards the creature," and not of the creatures "saying Thou" in return.[34] Thus, in the final analysis Buber seems to be thinking about our personal response to vegetable and animal life rather than reciprocity. According to Buber, man's response

to natural life is not simply contrived and completely self-initiated. Although the plant and the animal cannot "say Thou" to man, Buber argues that they can "say" something to man. Perhaps this "address" is actually man's ability to be open to nature and thus apprehend a meaning for himself in the disinterested, impersonal forces of natural life. This type of human apprehension of the world is undoubtedly an important part of our life in this world. That is, man expresses his unique nature by "saying Thou" to all the world, but man cannot be a Thou for any animal or plant. Therefore, it seems we should frankly conclude that true reciprocity does not exist in the realm Buber calls the "threshold" and "pre-threshold" of the I-Thou relationship. This same impossibility of reciprocity is found in the world of literature and art which becomes Thou for us, but we never become Thou for it.[35]

The absence of the manifest duality of I-Thou and I-It in animal behaviour is emphasized by Buber in his view of art. In the essay, "Distance and Relation," he explains that an animal uses a stick as a tool, but only man sets it aside for future use as a specific and persisting It with a known capacity. Buber observes that man, unlike any animal, is not satisfied with merely using and possessing his tools. Because man's essential nature arises from the world of Thou, he enters into a relationship with his tools and possessions, and thus imprints on them his relation to them. According to Buber, it is here, in

man's relation to things, that we find the origin of art. Buber explains:

> "To use (things), even to possess them, is not enough, they must become his in another way, by imparting to them in the picture-sign his relation to them. But the picture-sign grows to be a picture; it ceases to be accessory to a tool and becomes an independent structure. The form indicated by even the clumsiest ornament is now fulfilled in an autonomous religion as the sediment of man's relation to things."[36]

The artist, or "onlooker" as Buber has called him, is not intent on analysing and noting traits, as is the observer, but instead sees the object freely and awaits what will be presented to him. He perceives an existence instead of a sum of traits, and he makes a genuine response to this existence. This response manifests itself as creation of form.[37] Buber says that art "is the work and witness of the relation between the _substantia humana_ and the _substantia rerum_."[38] Therefore, in the creation of artistic form Buber sees relation but it is "man's relation to things" that characterises art. That is to say, art is a personal response to the Other but the Other does not make the artist its Thou. It is only the artist who "says Thou."

In the _Postscript_ to _I and Thou_ Buber discusses the appreciation of art and literature as well as the creation of "word and form."[39] He even suggests that the reader try an experiment with the saying of some great master of the past. Buber says we must listen to the saying as if we were in the master's

living presence. If possible, we must imagine he is personally speaking to us. We "must adopt towards him who is dead," Buber says, "the attitude which I call the saying of Thou."[40] Buber claims that if our concentration is increased until we have "turned our whole being to the saying," then the master will seem alive and his voice will be heard in his recorded words. If Buber presents this experience with the saying of a great master of the past as a typical "saying of Thou" to pieces of art and literature, then it seems that our relations with such spiritual forms are fundamentally a matter of making a personal response to passive words and forms. The latent "address" in books and paintings is actualized by the "sayer of Thou" who is man alone. Although we may have a special relationship with art and literature, there is no reciprocity. The experience consists of a general "address" to us by either word or artistic form and our response, i.e. "our saying of Thou." Therefore, we can conclude that artistic creation and appreciation, like our associations with nature, are limited experiences which by their very nature cannot be reciprocal.

It seems to me that Buber's analysis is made ambiguous by a semantic problem. He appears to give the words "mutuality" and "reciprocity" a double meaning. The I-Thou event between two persons is referred to as a mutual and reciprocal relationship. The usage of these words is appropriate in that context because both persons can imagine the viewpoint and feel the emotions of the

other. They can achieve such an exchange because of the ability to use language and other means of communication. But the words "mutuality" and "reciprocity" take on a quite different semantic function when used in the context of our association with nature, our artistic forms and our aesthetic appreciation. To speak of a mutual relation to a tree involves a personification of the tree. We are speaking as though the tree could enter into a personal relation and address us but it cannot. Hence, we are actually speaking analogically when the language of the I-Thou philosophy is used to give a more complete picture of man's experiences in the world and his self-expressions in art and literature. (By analogy I mean a way of speaking that acknowledges the resemblance of form or function to some thing essentially different.) But are we being fair to Buber's original intentions by making a distinction between I-Thou relations as a human fact and I-Thou as only an analogy imposed on nature and art? Probably we are not. I must admit to taking issue with Buber on this point. He seems to value the vagueness and ambiguity of his total I and Thou scheme, and it is quite possible that Buber would resist any attempt to remove its rather mystical quality. After all, the Postscript of 1957 gives little clarification to the earlier discussion in I and Thou; it basically reaffirms with very little change that which was written in 1923. In order to find a less obscure treatment of the whole problem, we must turn to John Macmurray. We recall that Macmurray forms a separate category

for the reciprocity of personal relationships with close friends, family, and other intimate acquaintances. He does not hesitate to emphasize the dissimilarity of "You and I" and our relation to other beings. Macmurray wisely attributes mutuality and reciprocity to human relationships alone. In my opinion, if we talk about an I and Thou relation between an artists and his work, for instance, we should begin with Macmurray by affirming man's unique capacity to experience mutual and reciprocal relationship. Then our descriptions of I and Thou events beyond the inter-human sphere would not be misunderstood and dismissed as some kind of mysticism. It would be clear that we are only trying to illuminate the nature of a very personal experience with the Other by the use of analogical language. In my judgment, such clarification would be advantageous to dicussions about I-Thou encounters in the religious sphere as well as the secular one. In other words, when we speak of an I-Thou relation to the eternal Thou, the absolute Person, it should be assumed that we are simply acknowledging the resemblance of form to something essentially different, i.e. that we are speaking only in an analogical sense. The personhood, or "thouness," of Transcendence remains an analogy in my use of the term because it is my conviction that the eternal Thou could not belong to corporeal existence in the same way that a human being does.

Before bringing this chapter to a close, I want to draw

attention to the vagueness of the third category, die geistigen Wesenheiten. Buber never says specifically what should be excluded from, and included in, the realm designated "spirit in phenomenal form."[41] The open and indefinite character of the third sphere of relations will prove to be an opportunity for expanding the scope of the I-Thou philosophy in future chapters. For the purpose of later discussions, it is also important to notice that Buber seems to suggest that we meet the eternal Thou in every sphere of relation, which would thus give a decidedly religious quality to Geistige Wesenheiten. Buber writes: "In every sphere in its own way . . . in each we are aware of the breath of the eternal Thou; in each Thou we address the eternal Thou."[42]

CHAPTER VII

THE RELATION BETWEEN I-IT AND I-THOU

The preceding chapter analysed I-Thou and I-It as contrasting modes of human life but they are not separate, segregated ways of living in the world. Rather, they are two modes of each man's life, two ways of living in one world. Hence, it is necessary, in order to have an adequate conception of I-It and I-Thou, to examine the relation between I-It and I-Thou. Buber has attempted to express the relation between our two modes of existence by the use of two metaphors. The first metaphor appears in the early treatise of 1923, I and Thou. He writes:

> "The It is the eternal chrysalis, the Thou the eternal butterfly - except that situations do not always follow one another in clear succession, but often there is a happening profoundly twofold, confusedly entangled."1

The metaphor of the chrysalis and the butterfly expresses two aspects of the relation between I-Thou and I-It. Firstly, the world of It always has within itself the potentiality of a new emergence of I and Thou. The I-Thou relationship constantly arises out of the sphere of It but then falls back into impersonal associations again.

Through the entire process the world of It remains unchanged and unbroken.[2] Nevertheless, in recognizing a powerful "unbroken world of It" Buber does not mean to compromise his belief that I-Thou is the primary reality of human life. He also speaks of the "unbroken world of Thou" and clearly designates the I-Thou relationship as the "cradle of the Real Life."[3] Secondly, the images of the chrysalis and the butterfly express the radical difference between I-It and I-Thou, which would suggest that the two modes are mutually exclusive and incompatible in any particular situation. However, in the passage quoted above Buber says that the two modes are often "confusedly entangled." This leaves us with troubling questions such as, are there situations in which the two modes are mutually exclusive and incompatible? If there are, how are such instances different from the circumstances in which I-It and I-Thou are "confusedly entangled"? Must we be satisfied with the admission that the two modes become entangled? Why not try to understand how they are entangled? In the American lectures of 1951 Buber uses another metaphor which answers some of these questions, but further clarification still will be needed. Buber says:

> "Both (I-It and I-Thou) build up human existence: it is not only a question of which of the two is at any particular time the architect and which is his assistant. Rather, it is a question of whether the I-Thou relation remains the architect, for it is self-evident that it cannot be employed as assistant. If it does not command, then it is already disappearing."[4]

The second metaphor symbolizes the superior role of the I-Thou relationship in constituting human nature. I-It is secondary and should always serve the life of I and Thou. Buber's comments on the metaphor make it clear that I-Thou cannot be used for the purpose of "saying It" because the genuine "saying of Thou" would immediately cease. Once any situation is truly characterized by I-It the "saying of Thou" is no longer present. The two modes of our existence become incompatible when we exclusively utilize any aspect of external being as an object. However, I-Thou benefits from the assistance of I-It when the "saying of Thou" predominates again. Buber's metaphors do not make this aspect of the relation completely clear. Important questions are left unanswered. How does I-It assist the I-Thou relationship? What aspects of the world of It contribute to I-Thou? Does the assistance of I-It occur during the relational event itself? That is, do the two modes of being appear concurrently during the relational event of I and Thou? These questions need to be answered in order that we may have an adequate understanding of the relation between I-It and I-Thou. Because Buber offers no explicit answers for the problems raised by his metaphors, his interpreter will need to assume the liberty of drawing conclusions from passages in Buber's writings which suggest answers he might have given.

The assistance given by I-It will become more apparent by analysing the relation between I-Thou and social institutions and

the relation between I-Thou and the inner life of emotion and thought. Buber critically writes:

> "The separated It of institutions is an animated clod without a soul, and the separated I of feelings an uneasily fluttering soul-bird. Neither of them knows man: institutions know only the specimen, feelings only the 'object'; neither knows the person, or mutual life."[5]

Buber argues that I-Thou relationships are the essential element of personal and public life.[6] Hence, it follows that "institutions yield no public life, and feelings no personal life"[7] because both are limited to the province of I-It. Although Buber exposes the limitations of feelings and social institutions, he certainly does not suggest that we should stoically suppress feelings and abolish social institutions.[8] Neither does Buber mean to depreciate the necessity of feelings and social institutions by denoting them as the sphere I-It.[9] On one hand, Buber says that "feelings are the mere accompaniment to the metaphysical and metaphychical fact of relation."[10] But, on the other hand, he says that we could not have an I-Thou relationship without feelings.[11] Buber has also made some comments which seem to indicate that he views thought or mind as an essential foundation of any I-Thou relationship. For instance, "the limits of the possibility of dialogue are the limits of awareness."[12] Again, he explains that the man who practises the genuine "life of dialogue" "will be pragmatically imitated, that is, people will try to use his 'procedure' without his way of thinking and imagining."[13] In addition to affirming that "living mutual relation includes feelings"[14] and a "way of

thinking and imagining," Buber seems to view social institutions as the setting and framework of I-Thou relationship.[15] Buber maintains, for example, that certain occasions will offer an employer the opportunity of relating to one of his employees as his "particular Thou," and he should live with a readiness for dialogue at all times. Buber also suggests that the I-Thou relationship could occur between two employees working on an assembly line. It may be only a glance for a moment but as they face one another, each man can project the "saying of Thou."[16] As men in a factory enter into an I-Thou relationship during a day dominated by the world of It, their institutional roles, i.e. employee and employer, do not cease, but they take on a new dimension. And the situation in the factory represents only one type of social institution. Our social environment is essentially composed of many different institutional roles which are related to the many institutions affecting our daily life. Therefore, when we examine these principal aspects of the world of It, i.e. social institutions, feelings, and thought, it appears that they frame and form the I-Thou relationship. But, to be sure, in Buber's judgment it is our will and mutual action which originate the I-Thou relationship.[17] While the world of It has a vital, creative part in I-Thou relationships, I-It must still remain subordinate. If social institutions, emotion and imagination are predominate in either public life or personal life, then the I-Thou relationship is negated, or at least interrupted. This often happens, hence

Buber asserts that I-Thou must constantly invade, transform, and thus fulfill the I-It structure of social institutions and the "separated I" of the inner life of feelings and thought.[18]

To the above analysis we should add John Macmurray's observation that I-It is necessary for communication between the two persons in a dialogue. Buber has never made this point as clear as he should have. Macmurray explains:

> "Even in the most personal of relationships the other person is in fact an object for us. We see his movements and his gestures; we hear the sounds he makes; if we did not we could not be aware of him at all. Yet we do not hear mere sounds or see mere movements or gestures. What we apprehend through these are the intentions, the feelings, the thoughts of another person who is in communication with ourselves. The impersonal aspect of the personal relation is always present, and necessarily so. It is not always noticed, yet it may be; and at times it may monopolize our attention so that we miss the meaning of the words he speaks or of the movements he makes. We may, perhaps, express in a general fashion what is here indicated if we say that in a personal relation between persons an impersonal relation is necessarily included and subordinated. The negative is for the sake of the positive. Or, from another point of view, we may say that the relation is intentionally personal, and includes the impersonal as a matter of fact."19

The entire preceding analysis of the relation between I-It and I-Thou can be summed up by using John Macmurray's idea of the "form of the personal."[20] Hence, it may be said that I-Thou is a "positive which includes, subordinates and is constituted through its own negative," that negative being I-It. Buber's anthropological views are a modified dualism but not a radical dualism in which I-It and I-Thou are presented as two equal and independent modes of being. In Buber's thought I-Thou and I-It

are polarities, yet they can be concurrent "modes of our existing with being." On one hand, I-Thou needs the presence of the world of I-It, but on the other hand, when I-It becomes dominant the tension is lost and I-Thou disappears. I-Thou exists together with I-It only when the world of It is subservient to the I-Thou relationship. To be sure, there is no single statement in Buber's writings which shows without doubt that he would totally approve of the conclusions of the above analysis. Buber would no doubt agree with Macmurray that human relations should be "intentionally personal," but we cannot be as certain that Buber would want to say that "I and Thou" "includes the impersonal as a matter of fact." Nevertheless, various passages and comments point in that direction, and thus an extension of Buber's categories to conformity with Macmurray's "form of the personal" seems admissible, perhaps even illuminating.

In an article entitled, "I-Thou and I-It: an Attempted Clarification of their Relationship," W. Taylor Stevenson makes a point which is pertinent to the present discussion. He says:

> "In questioning Buber's position, it is not his description of the two poles represented by the two primary words (I-It and I-Thou) which is inadequate, . . . that which can be called into question is whether or not all our experience can be located within these two separate realms." 21

Stevenson suggests that the majority of daily experiences are not pure I-It or pure I-Thou but "a relatively stable compound made up of elements from both realms."[22] He explains:

"This can be expressed more positively, and the difference from Buber seen more clearly, by saying that in this large middle ground the I-Thou relationship does not possess the exclusiveness and intensity of which Buber speaks, but nevertheless it is vitally present and effective between men, bearing hidden witness to the full I-Thou relationship from which it derives and to which it gives the hidden promise of returning. To express this concretely and plainly, we may say that there is a way of asking a waiter for a bottle of beer which carries with it this witness and this promise." 23

Stevenson's position on the relation between I-It and I-Thou gives some support to the clarification we have sought by the use of Macmurray's "form of the personal." Firstly, Stevenson also argues that most human experience does not fit into the pure, polar categories of I-It and I-Thou. He thinks Buber argues that "all our experience can be located within these two separate realms." This is a misinterpretation, at least an over-simplification, of Buber's position. Secondly, Stevenson likewise maintains that I-It and I-Thou are simultaneously present in ordinary personal relationships. In spite of these important points on which there is a consensus of opinion, Stevenson's notion of a "large middle ground" brings his position into basic disagreement with the view outlined in the present study. By using Macmurray's "form of the personal" we have been able to avoid positing a third category other than I-It and I-Thou, and thus we have been more faithful to Buber's original thought than Stevenson. Furthermore, the clarification which is made possible by "the form of the personal" enables us to better interpret the modified forms of I-Thou of which Buber speaks.

It seems that Buber has ackowledged modified forms of I-Thou in order to include larger aspects of human experience in his I-Thou philosophy. The preceding chapter has shown that I-Thou is primarily an intimate human relationship but Buber also tried to talk of different types of I-Thou in our experiences with nature and "spiritual entities." He has also admitted that there are gradations or degrees of I-Thou in the human sphere. He has mentioned a "technical dialogue" which appears to be an I-Thou relationship but lacks the "essence of dialogue." Buber remarks, "At times, indeed, it seems as though there were only this kind of dialogue."[24] He further explains that this inadequate kind of dialogue

> "belongs to the inalienable sterling quality of 'modern existence.' But real dialogue is here continually hidden in all kinds of odd corners and, occassionally in an unseemly way, breaks surface surpirsingly and inopportunely—certainly still oftener it is arrogantly tolerated than down-right scandalized—as in the tone of a railway guard's voice, in the glance of an old newspaper vendor, in the smile of the chimney-sweeper."[25]

Buber also discusses the association of I-Thou with other relations which are not pure I-It or I-Thou, such as debates, discussions, friendly conversation, and lovers' talk.[26] Buber does not present any of these limited and modified forms of dialogue as new categories to be placed beside I-Thou and I-It. He is merely applying the concept of I and Thou in judgment upon various human situations. He does not try to clarify his original "two primary words," I-It and I-Thou, by creating new terms or a third,

major category. Buber's essays on educational theory offer a good example of this very point.

Martin Buber taught professionally a large part of his life, and thus for him one of the most important forms of modified dialogue is the teacher-student relation. He maintains that the teacher should not mold or manipulate the student as an object, rather he must come before the student as a whole person and enter into a personal relationship with him. Hence, education is a dialogical relation, and like all forms of dialogue, it is based on what Buber calls "inclusion." That is to say, the teacher, without relinquishing his own feelings and views, comes to understand and experience the world as his pupil does. By means of "inclusion" the teacher learns both what ideas and experiences the student needs for further growth and what responses the student makes to his tutorial efforts. And the student always remains free to accept or reject that which the teacher gives. The maturity of the educator consists of the extent to which he is able to "experience the other side and stand firm in it," and his skill is measured by his ability to find and give that which the student needs when that particular need arises. Buber observes that above all the teacher must cultivate "trust" in his student, and that "trust" sustains their relationship even when they are no longer in each others presence. He calls this continuous relation "a subterranean dialogic." Buber emphasizes,

however, that the dialogue between a pupil and his teacher is a modified form of dialogue; it is a one-sided dialogue because only the teacher is allowed to practise "inclusion." In Buber's words:

> "The educator stands at both ends of the common situation, the pupil only at one end. In the moment when the pupil is able to throw himself across and experience from over there, the educative relation would be burst asunder, or change into friendship."[27]

In the Postscript of I and Thou Buber explains that the same type of modified dialogue exists between the psychotherapist and his patient and between the pastor and his congregation. He says: "Every I-Thou relationship, within a relation which is specified as a purposive working of one part upon the other, persists in virtue of a mutuality which is forbidden to be full."[28] Buber seems to be acknowledging that I-It, i.e. "purposive working of one part upon the other," constitutes a necessary framework that causes the I-Thou relationship to be modified and incomplete. Nevertheless, the mystery of dialogue is present, and even in its lesser forms the dialogical relationship sustains and gives meaning to all levels of human existence.

As suggested above, the modified forms of I and Thou can be properly accounted for when we view I-Thou as "a positive which includes, subordinates and is constituted by its own negative," I-It. Some I-Thou relationships can be constituted by including and subordinating only a small number of impersonal

factors. In these I-Thou relationships we might not even be aware of the elements of I-It. Hence, the relationship seems like pure I-Thou. However, other I-Thou relationships might be clouded by many, necessary impersonal factors and easily negated by them. We may say that I-Thou begins to lose its possible intensity in direct proportion to the increase of the I-It element in any given personal relationship. During our everyday life we may frequently realize when we "say Thou," and when we are "addressed as Thou," that the "saying of Thou" is being limited and modified by various impersonal factors. It is this type of personal relationship that Buber describes as a modified, limited form of I and Thou. Buber acknowledges that we are sometimes "incapable of realizing the Thou in its purity, yet (we can) daily confirm its truth in the (world of) It in accordance with what is right and fitting for the day."[29] Although Buber has not been entirely clear about this important point, still it seem that he recognizes these imperfect, unfulfilled relationships as a part of the reality which he calls I and Thou or dialogue. If so, then most, perhaps all, I-Thou relationships which Stevenson would call the "large middle ground" would already be represented by Buber's broader conception of I and Thou which includes both pure I-Thou and modified forms of I-Thou.

The study of the last two chapters indicates that the symbols, I-It and I-Thou, are capable of causing as much

indefiniteness as clarity in our understanding of man. Hence, in conclusion we might ask, what does the necessity of all the above clarification mean? The vague and problematic character of Buber's well-known terms suggests that they should be regarded primarily as poetic symbols rather than precise categories by which we can achieve an exhaustive philosophical understanding of man and society. Buber's writings, particularly his early works including Ich und Du, employ what may be called a romantic style. That is, central ideas are frequently expressed with metaphors and poetic phrases rather than formal logic and abstract statements. This style of writing was made popular amongst the German intelligentsia by literary figures, such as Goethe and Nietzsche, whom Buber admired. Hence, we may say that Buber is part of that romantic tradition of literature in which the line between poetry and philosophy is not easily drawn. In the introduction to the first publication of I and Thou in English, Professor Smith quite rightly explains that Buber's book is certainly philosophical, but it is not "an academic work of discursive philosophy,"[30] and "it belongs essentially to no single specialised class of learned work."[31] However, he also says, "We might call I and Thou a 'philosophical-religious poem.'"[32] Perhaps, a second observation could be made in regard to Buber's style. I-Thou experiences between men and with God do not have the definable properties of mathematical equations, business transactions,

scientific experiments, professional services, etc. Thus the reality of I and Thou might be too distorted by the precise language of It that a philosophical analysis would involve. Furthermore, it could be argued that a poetic style offers Buber the most effective means of discussing his subject matter because metaphors, symbols, and poems relate something of one's emotions and frame of mind. In other words, whereas the philosopher wants us to conceive an idea, a poet wants us to share his enthusiasm and experience. And it seems that Buber had both purposes in mind when he wrote I and Thou. It is true that his poetic symbols would require clarification and qualification in a rigorous philosophical study, but they are inadequate only when used apart from the purpose for which Buber originally intended them in 1923. He composed I and Thou in order to communicate a "vision" of man's true nature and his life with God.[33] It can be maintained that his "philosophical-religious poem" still possesses its power of communication to a degree which has rarely been equalled. Yet he sought to do more than give us a mental picture of true relation and the threat to it. Buber also wanted his readers to actualize the reality of I and Thou in their particular situation. It can be conceded that everyday experience seems to have many dimensions other than pure I-It and pure I-Thou. However, we will completely miss the whole point of Buber's message if we simply categorize human experience as I-It, I-Thou, and a "larger middle ground"

in which the two are intermingled. The whole of Buber's writings about the "life of dialogue" form a "sermonic masterpiece" which presents us with an interpretation of what it means to be a man in the world and before God. Once we have understood this deeper meaning of I-It and I-Thou, the next question is a personal one and not a philosophical one. This Jewish sage of our age would confront us with a world in which the sphere of It threatens to subjugate the life of I and Thou. Buber leads us to confess that we are responsible, and he admonishes us to "turn towards the other," which is "the basic movement of the life of dialogue."[34] Rather than settling down into the mediocrity of the "large middle ground between I-It and I-Thou," Martin Buber advocates a penetration of the world of It with I and Thou until genuine relationship becomes "a shining, streaming constancy."[35] Only then will "the moments of supreme meeting (become) not flashes in darkness but like the rising moon in a clear starlit night."[36] The world of It will still be everywhere present. But now, rather than over-running man, it will fulfil its proper function of enhancing human life. To continue Buber's symbolism, we could say that I-It will be "the night made beautiful by the moonlight."

CHAPTER VIII

THE EARTHLY THOU AND THE ETERNAL THOU

Martin Buber holds fast to his Jewish faith in the "God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." His affirmation of God has remained unshaken by the modern agnosticism which asserts that "God is dead." Although he was, as a young man, an ardent admirer of F. Nietzsche, Buber has never fully agreed with the cry of the "madman" of Nietzsche's parable. In the market-place the "madman" proclaims, "Where is God gone? I mean to tell you! We have killed him--you and I! We are all his murderers!"[1] Buber does admit, "Nietzsche's saying that God is dead, that we have slain Him, dramatically sums up the end situation of the era."[2] However, after listening to the boast of Nietzsche's "madman" Buber raises the crucial question, "But what God has been murdered?" Buber accepts the "death of God" as interpreted by Heidegger when he says, "The slaying means the elimination of the self-subsisting suprasensual world by man."[3] Martin Buber claims that the living God of his faith is not a component part of such a suprasensual world. "His place," Buber says, "is no more there than it is in the sensible world."[4] According to his understanding, the dead God was only a false image of the

true, living God. Who, then, is the living God in whom Buber believes?

The living God, for M. Buber, is that unlimited and unconditional Being who acts towards us as "the absolute Person." Buber does not intend simply to reduce "the Absolute" to a personal being. The nature of God's total qualities always remains a mystery to man. Nevertheless, whatever God's essential being is, Buber maintains it is necessary to declare that God has also become a Person in order to approach us and live with us on our own level of existence.[5] According to Buber, to call God the "absolute Person" only means that "God loves as a personality and that He wishes to be loved like a personality."[6]

However, even our awareness that God acts towards us as a Person is only another image of "the Absolute." Our many images of God only point beyond to "the Absolute." They never establish contact with the living God. In Buber's opinion, philosophy and theology tend to separate man from God rather then bring man to God because the living God is not an object which can be captured and possessed by ideas, images, and symbols. Merely to think of God or only know about God is still to be far from Him. We meet the living God by entering a relationship rather than by reflection. Buber explains:

> "It is only the relation I-Thou in which we can meet God at all, because of Him, in absolute contrast to all other existing beings, no objective aspect can be attained. Even a vision yields no objective viewing,

> and he who strains to hold fast an after-image after the cessation of the full I-Thou relation has already lost the vision."[7]

Hence, the "supreme meeting" of God and man happens in the full reality of I and Thou, and there alone. It follows that man can approach the "absolute Person" only as his "eternal Thou." Furthermore, Buber says, "The eternal Thou is eternally Thou."[8] The living God can never be used or experienced as an It. Nevertheless, Buber acknowledges that in accordance with our twofold nature we are continually trying to make the eternal Thou into It by feebly expressing God in ideas, symbols, myths, dogmas and even objects.[9] But the living God remains "the Being that is directly, most nearly, and lastingly over against us, (and) that may properly only be addressed, not expressed."[10] Thus, our knowledge of God becomes meaningless if we do not also have an immediate relationship with God. Our "life in God," in the view of Buber, is established and maintained only in the "living speech" of the I and Thou relationship between man and God.

In the <u>Postscript</u> of <u>I and Thou</u> Martin Buber reminds us that the I-Thou relationship between man and God, which he speaks of in <u>I and Thou</u> and nearly all his following works, is never to be interpreted as "something happening solely alongside or above the everyday."[11] Buber teaches that the eternal Thou is met in the everyday, earthly Thou. He says:

> "In every sphere (nature, spiritual forms, and human life) in its own way . . . we look out toward the fringe of the eternal Thou; in each we are aware of the breath from the eternal Thou; in each Thou we address the eternal Thou."[12]

God provides for our encounter of Him in the everyday situation in three ways, according to Buber: firstly, He has become a Person for us;[13] secondly, God always remains present in our immediate world; and thirdly, God has made us as persons capable of meeting with Him and with one another.[14] Because the living God gives personal life, even when we are overpowered by the world of It, we can always depend on the possibility of I-Thou relations with others and with God. But the dialogue between man and God through the concrete, daily situation demands the participation of both partners. The divine partner graciously provides and the human partner must <u>will</u> to enter relation with the living God. In his inaugural speech at Hebrew University Buber explains that we bring our human nature and situation to its full reality only when our relations with our fellowmen, the world, and God become essential.[15] This means that the "genuine person" is one who seeks a personal relationship with God in every moment and with his "whole being," and who attempts to realize this communion with God through an I and Thou relationship with other persons and through making natural life and spiritual forms our Thou.

In his conception of the "genuine community" M. Buber

merely extends his view of God and man to include the association of three or more persons. Our social life often involves a group of persons, as opposed to one particular person. Thus, we may ask, does I and Thou exist on the level of a group, or is I and Thou confined to a relation between two persons? Buber would reply, yes and no. In the essay, "What is Man?" Buber suggests the concept of "the essential We" to correspond, on the level of the relation to a group of men, with the "essential Thou on the level of self-being." He distinguishes the "essential We" from the "primitive We," to which the essential We is related in the same way as the essential Thou to the primitive Thou. The primitive Thou preceeds the consciousness of separation as an individual whereas the essential Thou follows and grows out of this awareness. In like manner, the essential We only comes about when independent people have come together in essential I-Thou relationship. The essential We is constituted by the reality of an I-Thou relationship existing between, or arising temporarily between, each member of the group. Buber says:

> "The genuine We is to be recognized in its objective existence, through the fact that in whatever of its parts it is regarded, an essential relation between person and person, between I and Thou, is always evident as actually or potentially existing."[16]

Buber presents this view of community life, i.e. "the essential We," as the proper alternative to collectivism, in which one conforms to the status quo and the control of a political or

economic principle, and to individualism, in which one rejects the _status quo_ of society and lives independently of others as much as possible. According to Buber, man degenerates into an inauthentic human existence by letting himself become either one among a "faceless" crowd or an isolated individual who lives aloof from the crowd. In Buber's view, the crowd must be transformed and hallowed by the reality of I and Thou.[17]

In the communal relation, as in the personal relation, we take our stand over against the living God as well as other persons. While entering into the relationships of community, all members within the community enter into relation with the eternal Thou through each other. The common bond in dialogue gives the members a common bond with the eternal Thou who is met in each I-Thou relationship of the group. Hence, Buber calls God the "living Centre" of true community. It follows that a gathering of people become a genuine community only if the members of the community take their stand in dialogical relationship with God as well as man. A community, as defined by Buber, comprises a gathering of persons bound together by the "living Centre."[18]

Having reviewed Buber's theology we can now understand his response to the claim that modern man has slain God. He certainly grants no credibility to the sceptic's view that God has never been more than either a hypothesis for explaining the

world or a projection and archetype of the psyche, and that such contrivances are now anachronisms. Buber explains popular atheism from the standpoint of his faith in God. In his view there are two feasible interpretations of the suggestive phrase, "the death of God." Firstly, in a speech delivered in Prague in 1937 Buber explained that

> "whether or not we know it, what we really mean when we say that a god is dead is that the images of God vanish, and that therefore an image which up to now was regarded and worshipped as God, can no longer be so regarded and so worshipped."[19]

He thinks it would be a grave mistake for us to permanently identify the living God with "one of the many images of God that are born and perish." According to Buber's aforementioned speech in Prague, Nietzsche realized that this terrible confusion is characteristic of our times. This is why the passing of our western idea of God is being experienced as a wide spread atheism. Buber says that "the idea of God, that masterpiece of man's construction, is only the image of images, the most lofty of all the images by which man imagines the imageless God."[20] And, in Buber's estimation, there is a great deal of difference between this "God of the philosophers" and the living "God of Abraham" in which he still firmly believes. Buber argues that a decline of faith in the "God of philosophers" in no way implies the mortality of the living, imageless God. Secondly, he interprets the "death of God" as a tragic unwillingness of man to enter a personal

relationship with the eternal Thou as well as the earthly Thou. Hence, the "death of God" is a problem of incomplete, profane, even godless, personal relationships and community. Buber prefers to speak of the "eclipse of God" rather than the "death of God" because the living God remains and His constant presence in our immediate world has not ceased. Buber explains:

> "An eclipse of the sun is something that occurs between the sun and our eyes, not in the sun itself . . . in this instance (the eclipse of God), something is taking place between heaven and earth . . . yet He who is denoted by the name lives in the light of His eternity. But we, 'the slayers,' remain dwellers in darkness, consigned to death."[21]

The mastery and predominance of the world of It naturally intensifies this "eclipse of God." However, I-It is not evil in itself but it is essentially profane. The living God is always present through hidden by the world of It. Nevertheless, Buber believes in common with the Hasidim that all our life in the world is potentially sacred. Like a Hasidist sage, Buber admonishes modern man to hallow this life, to make our immediate world sacred by going out to meet God in new I-Thou relationships. Our I-Thou relationships are meant to be the ever-changing vehicle of an unchanging relation to the eternal Thou. That is, our relationship with God is enduring as long as we are willing to enter into genuine I and Thou relationships. Therefore, the "eclipse of God" occurs whenever we face our earthly Thou but deny God, or conversely, as we try to find the eternal Thou by turning

away from the world, and most tragically, when we totally submit ourselves to the world of It. It is the world and our whole dialogical life in the world which offers a way back to the living God.

It seems to me that Buber converts the crude "pansacramentism" of the Hasidim into an answer to the modern question—what is religion? The I-Thou philosophy, when taken as a whole, forms a philosophy of religion in which the essence of being religious is seen to consist of an I-Thou relation to God in the immediate situation. This point of view allows a religious man to be fully historical being bound to the world, and this affirmation of the world does not necessitate forsaking an intimate relationship with Transcendence. In fact, as Buber understands man's dialogue with God, this relationship forces us deeper and more radically into the secular, earthly life. It seems that Buber's thought accentuates the secularity and worldliness of Hebraic religion, and hence provides its adherents with an effective way of understanding themselves in the context of a culture, like the present western culture, in which nature and history are increasingly preeminent in the beliefs men have about the meaning of their existence. However, in spite of this appealing aspect of the I-Thou philosophy, Martin Buber certainly must expect a critical philosopher to demand some rational, logical support for his theological claims that there is a living God and a

mutuality between man and this absolute Person in our immediate world. But Buber says, "The existence of mutuality between God and man cannot be proved, just as God's existence cannot be proved."[22] We should not, of course, demand that the religious person defend his faith by reason alone. But Buber assumes the existence of his type of God, asserts the mutuality between man and that God, and simply identifies the earthly Thou as the place man meets the eternal Thou and the Otherness over against us as the presence of that Transcendent One who is supposedly immanent in our world. If Buber removes this innermost part of the I-Thou philosophy from rational philosophical argumentation, then what certitude or verification can he offer? Buber says that he appeals solely to "the court of faith."[23] Furthermore, faith is rewarded by experience. However, he frankly admits that experience is arbitrary. Some men experience only the "eclipse of God" and others experience an encounter with God.[24] Unfortunately, Buber's writings do not include an explicit discussion of an experiential verification of religious faith, yet is seems that he assumes a point of view similar to the one John Baillie has elaborated in <u>The Sense of the Presence of God</u>.[25] Baillie argues that religion cannot be expected to present empirical verification as the sciences do. Religion is an entirely different level of human experience and has its own mode of verification. The assertions of faith have the verification of religious experience rather than empirical

testing. This general line of argument does have limitations. Religious experience is personal and arbitrary, hence it is not a proof that everyone can understand and must accept. Religious experience results in a confirmation of faith only for the one who had the experience, and thus it leads to a confession of faith alone. As Buber willingly admits in the concluding sentences of his Postscript of 1957 to I and Thou, he who dares to speak of his relationship with God in the world only "bears witness."[26] Thus the life of dialogue with God depends on the certitude of faith-experience alone. And, in the final analysis, it seems that the I-Thou theology is basically an audacious confession of faith. Whether this is judged as the weakness or the strength of Buber's position will depend on whether one stands in a community of faith or in the totally secular world. From the viewpoint of a secularist Buber's thought must sound like a fantastic mysticism, perhaps even ridiculous gibberish. But the man who shares Buber's faith and experience will probably claim that Buber has expressed the true religious reality. Perhaps we now have a clearer idea of what Buber means by a unity of life and religion. He could not mean that our secular "life in the world" is our "life in God" or that it necessarily leads to a "life in God." Rather, our relationship with God transcends the world and arises from faith but it is, nevertheless, maintained within the historical and natural world. For the man of faith every I and Thou

relationship in the world promises a new theophany. But we must raise an important question here. If we identify the heart of religion with personal faith and new theophanies alone, will we not seriously depreciate the place of dogmas and rituals in our religious life? Has Buber made such a mistake?

In an early essay, "Jüdische Religiosität" (1916), Buber adopts the contrast between Religiosität and Religion that was first made by his teacher, Georg Simmel.[27] Religiosität, according to Buber, is the sense of a Transcendence that desires a living relation to us in our finitude. That relation crystallizes itself into customs and precepts which are later handed down from generation to generation as a binding Religion. But this religion has no meaning or validity unless it is transformed by the reality of relation that takes place between God and men.[28] In "Cheruth. -Eine Rede über Jugend und Religion" (1919), he says further that religious truth is not conceptual and ordered content, but it is the experiences of the Absolute that we work out in our concrete life.[29] This line of thought continues into the development of his mature I-Thou philosophy. In the concluding pages of I and Thou Buber addresses himself to the question: "what is the origin of the expressed knowledge and ordered action of the religions?"[30] He views the development as a declension from the "pure relation" of the "supreme meeting" with God. The decline has two stages which we might call awareness of God and objectification of God.

Buber believes that the human-divine encounter gives rise to forms, die Gestalten, that constitute elemental perceptions of God's manifestations in the world. He says that these forms are a "mixture of It and Thou," and they complete the theophany if every form is constantly broken down and renewed in successive confrontations with God. Buber claims that the eternal Thou by its nature cannot become It. Yet God is near those forms that are continually flowing in and out of our "pure relation" to Him. But man is not content with "the living prayer, the immediate saying of Thou," Buber regrets, and consequently the forms harden into Glauben and Kult. This is the final stage of the decline in which the forms become objects, i.e. It alone rather than a combination of It and Thou. Buber supposes that man's desire for continuity and security is not satisfied with "the life-rhythm of pure religion." Man wants some image to hold before himself when he turns away because the eternal Presence can be withstood no longer. Then the ideas and images gradually replace the presence of God, and "God becomes an object of faith," that is, a representation of God becomes an object or It. In like manner, man makes God into an object of cult because of his need for concrete continuity in space as well as time. The spatial structure of the supreme meeting with God is "the 'solitude' of the I before the Thou," Buber claims. The religious man longs to express and confirm his personal experience in a community

of other men who live in relation with God, "thus God becomes the object of cult." Gradually the acts of religion and personal prayer are displaced by "communal prayer" and "ordered devotional exercises." However, this state of the religions is not the end of man's relation to God, in Buber's mind. He believes that here and there a man rises out of the religions and returns to "pure relation" with God. A religion has life in it, according to Buber, only to the extent that some adherents still enter into a living relation with God. Hence, Buber ascertains a cycle in the religious experience of mankind: "In turning the Word is born on earth, in expansion the Word enters the chrysalis form of religion, in fresh turning it is born again with new wings."[31]

In my opinion, Buber errs by separating the content of the religions and the I-Thou relationship with God into a false dichotomy. Consequently he makes the following type of derogatory comments about the religious establishment: ". . . the truth of religion consists not of dogma and prescribed ritual but means standing and withstanding in the abyss of the real reciprocal relation with the mystery of God. . ."[32] In his study of the prophetic faith Buber observes: "God does not attach decisive importance to 'religion.' Other gods are dependent on house, an alter, sacrifical worship, because without these things they have no existence. . . . He (God) desires no religion."[33] Again, Buber writes:

"Religion can hide from us as nothing else can the face of God. Principle there, dogma here, I appreciate the 'objective' compactness of dogma, but behind both (moral laws and dogma) there lies in wait the —profane or holy—war against the situation's power of dialogue, there lies in wait the 'once-for-all' which resists the unforeseeable moment. Dogma, even when its claim of origin remains uncontested, has become the most exalted form of invulnerability against revelation."[34]

And in I and Thou he states:

"Degeneration of the religions means degeneration of prayer in them. Their power to enter into relation is buried under increasing objectification, it becomes increasingly difficult for them to say Thou with the whole undivided being, and finally, in order to say it, man must come out of the false security into the venture of the infinite—out of the community, that is now over-arched only by the temple dome and not also by the firmament, into the final solitude."[35]

One must certainly grant that Buber points up here one of the main problems of the traditional, long-established religions. It is necessary for man to go back constantly to the vision and vitality of the early adherents of a great religion. Again and again, we must take up anew their daring, often solitary, search for a new relation to religious reality. Yet if we take Buber too seriously on this point, we might end up a Kierkegaardian type of religionist who alienates himself from the religious establishment in order to find an authentic relation with God. (Moral legislation, a central feature of organized religion, will be discussed at length in a later chapter, hence it is not mentioned here.) Buber presumes that dogmatics and public worship easily encumber the man who would go out to meet the eternal Thou. Indeed, he must have felt this

way personally because we are told that Buber gave up his formal religious observances as a young man, and he apparently was not actively affiliated with any synagogue.[36] In a letter to Franz Rosenzweig Buber recalls, "When I was fourteen I stopped putting on my Tefillim."[37] For him that act probably marked a personal dissociation with formal Judaism. But can the doubts and possible deficiency of Buber's religious outlook be legitimately generalized into the claim that the truth of religion consists not of dogma and prescribed ritual but of the insecure, formless, dialogical relation with the eternal Thou? Surely for the majority of religious persons in the world the truth of religion lies in both religious order and the freedom of meeting God in a personal relationship. The dichotomy of "either-or" misunderstands the reality of religion that can be better expressed in terms of "both-and." The deeper question that must be asked is—why must one minify established doctrines and communal ceremonies by relegating them to the sphere of It? In my judgment, it is equally valid to look upon theological statements and liturgical formulations as part of that third sphere of I-Thou relations that Buber calls <u>Geistige Wesenheiten</u>, meaning "spirit in phenomenal forms."

In a previous discussion it was suggested that <u>Geistige Wesenheiten</u>, which has been translated—spiritual forms, is composed of all secular arts but the category was left open by its general, vague nature.[38] It seems admissible to include also dogmas and rituals

firstly because they frequently involve a wide scope of arts, and secondly they differ from the secular arts in that it is much easier to understand how we might find "the breath of the eternal" in religious art-forms. Ancient prayers and patristic creeds, for instance, are highly refined and rigidly ordered forms of spiritual expression, thus they might seem to be pure It, but these symbols have a sacramental function as much as any other potential Thou of our world. In this sense, theological literature and religious ceremonies are more likely components of the third sphere of relations than other spiritual forms. (By "sacramental function" I mean that theological images make the divine Presence and Address more immediate to us, and in like manner, the words and actions of communal worship aid us in making a satisfying response to God. To use Buber's terminology, dogmas and rituals serve as modes of encounter that embody the saying of Thou by both the eternal Thou and the human partner.) The idea of a sacramental function, of course, does not depend on the absence of all I-It elements in the "expressed knowledge and ordered actions of religions." Quite to the contrary, it seems that Buber's concept of a "mixture of It and Thou" in _die Gestalten_ could equally apply to the further refinement of _Glauben_ and _Kult_. The use of Macmurray's "form of the personal" might make this relationship clearer. We could say that in the case of dogmas and rituals, the I-Thou element "is the positive that includes, subordinates, and is constituted by

the negative," the element of I-It. To be sure, we are correctly warned by Buber against letting the attitude of I-It shut us off from the central reality of religion. Yet one should remember that it is not religious formality in itself that marks degeneration in the religions but form without spirit, convention with only an indifferent disposition. This is most likely the main point that both Jesus and the Hasidim were making in their fight against Jewish legalism and formalism. It could be argued that neither the early Hasidim nor the early Jewish Christians meant to debase organized religion itself as godless, that is, as void of the possibility of a relation to Transcendence. It is we who are not always present in the moment of divine Address, according to Buber, but the eternal Speaker is always everywhere present in the world. Why should we not say the same about the world of communal prayer and confession of faith in a formal setting? If God awaits us in the everyday world, he surely is likewise waiting for us in the sacred world, the centre of the secular world, in the church and synagogue.

Buber devoted himself to renewing and retelling the legends of an outmoded sect from which few Jews would expect to find spiritual strength for life in our twentieth century. And in the next part of this study we will find that Buber accepts the discipline of Biblical teachings as well as classical Hasidist legends and sayings. He believes a Jew should participate in these traditions and bring

them to life again in contemporary society. Hence, although he distrusts the rituals, dogmas, and moral legislation of his religious tradition, Buber remains open to unsystematic expressions of faith as long as they are free of authoritarian agencies. One senses that it may be the fear of a loss of freedom that is underlying Buber's struggle with organized religion. If so, we might be more sympathetic with him on this point. There seems to be a real danger on occasion that the ecclesiastical authorities will destroy the spirit by denying sufficient freedom in religious life by subduing new patterns of worship and new images of Transcendence. Dogmas and rituals thereby become in that case the enemy of religion. In order to avoid this situation it is necessary for rabbis, priests, and pastors to see rightly the nature of the responsibility implied in their authority. The religious leader bears the same responsibility that Buber places upon the new type of educator. That is, the instructor of religious faith should try to see the world from the stance of the one seeking his guidance. He should give the spiritual insights and encouragement that are appropriate for each person's problems and individual religious development. Religious authorities have a poor reputation in some circles because they too frequently attempt to force intelligent, competent people into outmoded, preconceived styles of religious life. I question whether any religious leader has the "God-given right" to denounce someone's relation to Transcendence and Truth because

that relation is not expressed and lived out in accordance with his views or the heritage of one particular group within the total scope of a great religion. It seems to me that a Christian leader, particularly in Protestantism, does not stand between man and God but rather points beyond himself to the eternal Thou. We recall from our study of Hasidism that Buber said, "The Zaddikim pointed men with great seriousness to that immediate relationship with God that no mediation can replace."[39] Perhaps that same ideal of leadership could be suggested for all agents of religious authority and centralization. The basic force of the I-Thou theology would not be lost by such a point of view. In fact, it would be enhanced because organized religion would then present no lasting obstacle to a life of I and Thou in the world and before God.

It is interesting to notice that the thought of Franz Rosenzweig, Jewish existentialist and Buber's close friend, gives support to our modification and formulation of the I-Thou philosophy of religion. Rosenzweig shows that the life of dialogue need not be set in opposition to the Jewish religion as an establishment. During his university studies in philosophy Rosenzweig broke with the Hegelian "religious intellectualism" that was the prevailing philosophical fashion in Germany. He argued that God redeems man not indirectly through history, but individually through personal conviction. Rosenzweig sought a religion of

personal commitment and piety that he imagined could not be found in Judaism, which at first he viewed as merely an arid system of moral rules and regulations. Hence, in 1913 Rosenzweig decided to become a Protestant Christian, but he wanted to enter the new Way as a Jew, like the first disciples of Christ. Thus he attended synagogue services in the period immediately preceding his intended baptism. Then, on the eve of _Yom Kippur_, the High Holy Day of Atonement, he realized that his spiritual needs could be met by Judaism, and he resolved to work out his theology within the framework of his ancestral religion. Before Rosenzweig could seriously start a program of Judaic studies, however, the war broke out, and he enlisted in the Kaiser's army. During battles and in the hospital he began to write his _magnum opus_, _Der Stern der Erloesung_, on post cards and scraps of paper.

> "_The Star of Redemption_ formed the basis of a religious philosophy which Rosenzweig refined later in a succession of essays. He argued that a satisfying religion required more than a legal system, more even than 'ethical behaviour.' It required 'life' thinking, or 'existential' thinking, which was less concerned with the establishment of universal truths, than with 'making sense' of one's own existence. Of course, it was far easier to make sense if we had faith in the divinity of the universe and in God's plan for human fulfillment. For Rosenzweig such faith could not be other than a divine-human encounter, a meeting, in which man made his total commitment to God and God offered His grace to man. The life of faith, the only true religious existence, Rosenzweig believed, was lived on a plane where God and man were linked by a bond of personal communion, by revelation. The 'new thinking,' therefore, was thinking which bore a closer similarity to speech, to dialogue, than to abstract thought. Rosenzweig's God was not a remote lawgiver, nor a mere synonym for ideals and sentiments.

> It was a God who actually entered into one's life at every point, and without whom no moment of life could have meaning. . . . In the 'liturgic year,' the sequence of Sabbath and holidays, Rosenzweig was convinced that he divined the symbolic representation of the three basic ideas of Judaism: Creation, Revelation, and Redemption. By full-heartedly accepting these ideas--and their ritual as well as moral enactment--as an intimate regimen of one's behavior, one brought God into one's life, touched, communicated with His Divine Presence in the process of 'proving' one's belief in Him. It was this communication which invested Judaism with meaning in one's daily existence, and prevented religious observance from becoming a lifeless routine."[40]

In the 1920's when Rosenzweig was taken ill and confined to his bed, we are told that a minyan assembled for private orthodox services at his home.[41] Thus even in his last days he exemplified a harmony of dialogical theology and the formality of Jewish religion. And in his writings we find neither a distrust of permanent order nor the setting apart of dialogical reality. The negative category of I-It was brought to dialogical philosophy by Martin Buber. Although Buber tells us that he had developed his own dialogical thinking before reading The Star of Redemption, we can surely assume that his association with Rosenzweig at the Free Jewish Academy of Frankfurt gave him much encouragement and further insights. And after Rosenzweig's untimely death it was Buber who carried this Jewish theology of inwardness and personal communion to its completest formulation. However, Buber could never appreciate in the same way the dogmas, rituals, and laws of official Judaism. In this sense, Buber's I-Thou philosophy of religion always fell short of the thought of his friend and colleague.

Summary and Conclusion:

In Part One, "A Study of Hasidism," we concluded that Buber's Hasidist foundation consisted of a panentheistic conception of the relationship between man and God. The Hasidim believe that God is dwelling in our immediate world and present history, and hence the man of God can enter into an intimate, dialogical relationship with God by directing every action and thought towards Him. When man is thus bound both to the world and to God, all daily, secular life becomes holy living. In Part Two we have found that the mood of Hasidism pervades the I-Thou philosophy, for Buber's basic conception of I and Thou involves a panentheistic viewpoint of man's relation to God. We have further concluded that his I-Thou philosophy represents not only a religious view of man, but also a religious way of life because it includes, and depends upon, belief in a personal God and a personal relationship between the human and the divine. In the Postscript of I and Thou Buber indicates that "the close connection of the relation to God with the relation to one's fellow-man" is "the central significance" of his I-Thou philosophy.[42] However, he has also claimed that the "earthly Thou" through which we meet the "eternal Thou" can be some part of nature and any spiritual form as well as our fellow-men. Our whole immediate world, therefore, can become our Thou and mediate our "supreme meeting" with God. Hence, the I-Thou philosophy seems to extend and recast the Hasidist

concept of religious life into a contemporary view of sacred life with God. That is to say, Buber is asserting in the I-Thou philosophy that God resides in our immediate world and present history in order to establish the supreme I-Thou relationship with man through our everyday responses to nature, art, and primarily through our daily human relationships. According to Buber, if the man who has faith in God leads a life permeated with I and Thou experiences, then his secular life in the world is transformed into a sacred life with God. And, in Buber's estimation, we fulfil the fundamental meaning and purpose of human existence by living this holy "life of dialogue." In the next part of the study we will find that his interpretation of Biblical Judaism and his views on socialism and Zionism can be understood as an expansion and application of the I-Thou philosophy. To speak metaphorically, we may call the I-Thou philosophy the edifice built on the Hasidist foundation, and Buber's views on Biblical Judaism and Zionism may be called the second and third levels of the main edifice.

PART THREE: AN INTERPRETATION OF BIBLICAL JUDAISM

CHAPTER IX

MARTIN BUBER'S APPROACH TO THE BIBLE

Arthur Cohen recalls that at a student gathering in 1952 Buber was asked if he considered himself a "Jewish theologian." In reply he explained that "religious thinker" would be a better term than "theologian." Moreover, he preferred "Hebrew thinker" to "Jewish religious thinker" because he did not support what is often called "normative" Judaism.[1] By "Hebrew thinker" does Buber mean to imply that he accepts the ancient Hebraic thought of the Bible as his final source of binding authority? That is doubtful. In a personal letter to Malcholm Diamond in 1957 Buber wrote: ". . . I never said I accepted the Hebrew Bible as a whole -- far from it. In my choice I am led by what I can . . . believe as willed by God for me, for us, for man."[2] Nevertheless, Buber says that many of his basic beliefs can be found in the Hebrew Bible more consistently than in any other single book of antiquity,[3] and we can be certain that he held the Bible, as a piece of literature, in high regard. He was willing, in collaboration with Franz Rosenzweig, to undertake the momentous task of translating the Hebrew Bible into a German idiom that would retain the literary and stylistic character of the original text. He also devoted

much of his religious and intellectual energies to arduous exegesis of the ancient text. Buber's competent investigation of the original literary sources of Judaism gives a sound foundation to his interpretation of the essential features of Biblical Judaism.

Although Buber propounds a definitive Biblical theology in his writings, he rejects the tendency to crystallize the tradition into authoritative theological statements. He thinks that Jewish scholars should interpret and instruct the Jewish people in the Biblical faith not in order to impose some particular Biblical theology on them but to make the fundamental source of Jewish religion available to modern Jewry. This availability is of utmost importance to Buber's view of the Jewish way of life. He believes each generation must remember the origins of their religion and nationhood, and by the act of remembering they are prepared to discover faith anew. The rediscovery comes by bringing the past into the everyday life and by finding new meaning in that ancient way of life and thought. The older generation must then pass their faith on to the next because Jewish education and Jewish existence depends on remembering and reliving the Biblical faith again and again. Moreover, Buber believes that it is this continuing drama of religious experience that formed the Jewish Scriptures and has made Judaism a living faith through the centuries. He writes:

> "We must realize that in spiritual as well as in physical propagation it is not the same thing that is passed on, but something which acquires newness in the very act of transmission. . . . A generation can only receive the teachings in the sense that it renews them. We do not take unless we also give. In the living tradition it is not possible to draw a line between preserving and producing."[4]

This attitude towards religious traditions and the process of transmitting them is reflected in his view of the proper approach to reading the Bible.

Buber's method of Biblical study has an academic side and a profoundly personal side. We might say that he approaches the Scriptures in the spirit of both I-Thou and I-It. From Buber's point of view, our personal relation to the Bible is more fundamental, and thus it will be reviewed first. He recognizes that today men often do not share the Biblical faith and its world-view. But if we are to become really serious about reading the Bible, Buber thinks that we must begin by emptying our mind of all preconceptions and prejudices about the Book. He says that a contemporary man "must face the book with a new attitude as something new." Further,

> "He must yield to it, withhold nothing of his being, and let whatever will occur between himself and it. He does not know which of its sayings and images will overwhelm him and mold him, from where the spirit will ferment and enter into him, to incorporate itself anew in his body. But he holds himself open."[5]

Buber does not teach that we are compelled to bow before the Bible as a source of infallible revelation and absolute authority. Rather, yielding ourselves to the Bible means that serious study

of this Book requires a readiness to be a humble learner and a willingness to become personally involved in its message. In other words, he suggests that the modern Jews open themselves to their Bible as autonomous, eclectic students and find out how it can contribute to their life in the twentieth century. This approach anticipates an encounter in which the open reader and the Bible are equally free and independent. Neither the reader nor the Book are forced to give up their real identity and position in history. The Jewish Scriptures are permitted to remain an ancient religious document which records the faith of a particular people, and the man living today is allowed to retain his intellectual integrity and a primary concern for his own spiritual needs. Buber hopes that this relation to the Bible will bring the ancient faith to life again in our present situation. That is to say, the reader will hopefully find that some Biblical events illuminate his own spiritual experiences, and some Biblical teachings will deepen his own insights into religious truth. Of course, not all men will be inspired by the same portions of the Bible nor will they all see the same significance in any given passage. However, when a story or a verse becomes meaningful because it is reflected in our own life, the old Book of the early Hebrews turns into personal revelation for that particular man today. Buber admits that this is only the first step towards having a faith which is rooted in the Bible. He maintains, however, that a sound

Biblical faith is able to grow out of such a sincere acceptance of whatever is personally meaningful.[6] His approach should not be confused with "demythologizing." He believes in the use of myths as a means of revealing religious truth. And Buber hopes that by an honest, personal confrontation with the Jewish myths and teachings the Biblical revelation will eventually become authenticated and reinterpreted in the spiritual experiences of contemporary men rather than the rationalistic framework of our age. Certainly Buber's studies reflect an intense, personal appreciation for the Biblical message as well as the detached, critical attitude of rigorous scholarship. We now turn to the formal side of his Biblical study.

Like most academic readers of the ancient Biblical literature, Buber concludes that it is the product of a different mode of historical thinking than the one to which we are accustomed nowadays. He says:

> "The Biblical narrative itself is basically different in character from all that we usually classify as servicable historical sources. The happenings recorded there can never have come about, in the historical world as we know it, after the fashion in which they are described."[7]

However, he does not mean that the Bible is therefore merely a product of man's imagination and inner spiritual experiences. Rather, Buber suggests that the sayings and stories did originate with a natural, historical event, but the person or

group of people who was present experienced the occasion "as revelation vouchsafed to them by God, and preserved it as such in the memory of generations, an enthusiastic, spontaneously formative memory."[8] Buber explains that this "memory allowed them to remember events as they did not occur and could not have occurred."[9] He further concludes that "the elemental nature of this memory (was) so mighty, that it is quite impossible to extract any so-called historical matter from the Bible."[10] Hence, Buber comes to the conclusion, common amongst German literary critics, that the actual, empirical events, which form the background of the narratives, are not available to a student of the Biblical text. However, he still maintains that we can uncover the basic developments in another type of history, a history of faith. The essence of this sacred history consists of experiencing God in the course of history, and it arises from the perception of faith which sees a particular, empirical event as an "act of God" and a revelation from God.[11] But Buber does not mean to imply that this revelatory "act of God" is in any way "supernatural." In his opinion, "natural events are the carriers of revelation, and revelation occurs when he who witnesses the event and sustains it experiences the revelation it contains."[12] It has already been emphasized that Buber believes God is always everywhere present. Now, according to his view, that means we can still see Him in natural events just as the ancient Israelites did. He concludes,

therefore, that the great Biblical revelations and the everyday revelations, which are possible for each man, only differ in intensity; they are the same in kind.[13]

Whether in the twentieth century or 2000 B.C., the man of faith encounters God in the course of history while other men might experience nothing divine in the same events. Thus Buber is evidently suggesting that there are two basic ways of looking at history, not only that of the past, but also that which is happening around us. These two ways could be called the secular and the religious points of view. The religious point of view includes history in what he calls "the universal reality of faith."[14] Now, Buber says there are two radically different ways of viewing history religiously. He calls them the "survey of history 'from above'" and "from below."[15] He says that the "survey of history 'from above'" has always been wide spread among nations who see "history as a series of successes, every one of which is sponsored by God himself."[16] In this view, the historical events resulting from human agency take place because God endows men with power, and the men who "make history" fight for their right to that power.[17] They are devoted to maintaining and exerting it, but often with little regard for those they cause to suffer.[18] The "survey of history 'from below'" is, in Buber's estimation, peculiar to Israel. He says that for the people of Israel "history is an action which takes place between God and

man, a dialogue of action."

> "Whatever happens between God and the participant in the dialogue whom He himself has appointed and made independent, is history. Whether a man is powerful or powerless makes no difference in the role he plays in the dialogue of history."[19]

> "God carries on his dialogue with the creature to whom he has given power and it must render an account to him stating whether it has used his power in obedience to the given command. But he also carries on a dialogue with that other creature, that which suffers from the abuse of power. God hears its cry and himself renders an account in lieu of the wielder of power."[20]

Therefore, according to Buber, the dialogue of history involves the total life of every man, whether he is the greatest king or the most despised begger. Furthermore, he claims that this dialogue between God and His creatures is the essence of "the whole history of the world, the hidden, real world history."[21] (In anticipation of the later discussion of Buber's socialist theory, we might notice that it is suggested here that the course of history is decided at a more fundamental and spiritual level than the so-called "power structure.")

Buber explains that all events of nature and history are God's address to us, yet we cannot interpret God's claim on the person next to us. God speaks personally to each one. Hence, each person must concentrate on trying to understand that which God is demanding of him, and then act because God depends on every man to be "an originator of events."[22] And God is able to continue addressing us through the very events which constitute our response

to Him. "History is a dynamic process," says Buber. God lives in history with mankind, and God's will changes as man responds to it. The divine will is not a system or a plan, hence "one must not rely on one's knowledge," he cautions. "One must go one's way and listen all over again."[23] This view of the "real, hidden world history," we might observe, again expands the scope of Buber's I-Thou philosophy. That is, the I-Thou philosophy becomes a philosophy of history as well as a philosophy of man and religion.

Now, Buber maintains that the history of faith in the Bible is a history of the dialogue between Israel and their God. It is a story of failure and suffering; it is about the weak and humble. The Bible knows nothing of the intrinsic value of success and power. Our history books and newspapers record man's failures along with his achievements, but, according to Buber, Biblical history is characterized by a "glorification of failure."[24] He writes:

> "For what the Bible understands by history is a dialogue in which man, in which the people (of Israel), is spoken to and fails to answer, yet where the people in the midst of its failure continually rises up and tries to answer."[25]

In his opinion, more than any other chronicle of world literature, the Bible is a "survey of history 'from below.'"

The Biblical narratives of the history of faith come to us in a literary form to which we are no longer accustomed. The

Bible certainly does not depict people and events as they were in actual history. They are obviously distorted and embellished accounts, and it is difficult for a man of our age to be sympathetic with the primitive historical consciousness which produced the Bible. Although Buber is willing to call the fanciful descriptions and narratives of the Bible "myths," he argues that they are nevertheless "legitimate ways of giving an account of what existed and what happened."[26] In order to understand correctly what Buber is saying here about the accounts of Biblical history, it is necessary to determine what he means by myth. He defines myth as the outcome and record of an overwhelming sense of God's presence in an event.[27] In an early article, "Myth in Judaism," he writes, "We must call myth any narrative of a sensible real event in which this event is felt and represented as divine."[28] When this article was published again in 1950, Buber added prefatory remarks in which he explained: "Had I written the essay some years later, I would have made it clearer that real myth is the expression, not of our imaginative state of mind or mere feeling, but of a real meeting of two Realities."[29] Hence, myths are created by men of faith who have experienced the divine Presence forcefully and decisively addressing them in a particular event. The mythological language of these witnesses records that "real, hidden history," the history of faith, the history in which man and God meet "face to face." Buber claims that "living monotheism

needs myth, as all religious life needs it, as the specific form in which its central events can be kept safe and lastingly remembered and incorporated."[30] Thus, when he says that the Biblical myths are a "legitimate way of giving account of what happened," Buber probably means that they are the vehicle by which Israel was able to recall and relive the central events of its history of faith. A factual "account of what happened" would not have had this potency. It would have been unable to "hand down" the original experience of faith to the following generations. Buber also explains that the myth allows these special events, as seen by the "eyes of faith," to remain contemporary in the oral tradition. Every new generation shares in these original experiences and witnesses to their participation in the events of the history of faith by reworking, elaborating and embellishing the mythological accounts. Buber calls this phenomena "the formative, organic, myth-creating memory" of "the community soul."[31] He says that if the myth assumes poetic form in its early stage of development, it remains virtually unchanged for a long time, even when it is transmitted by word of mouth alone. However, if the myth remains in a fluid state during oral transmission, differing religious and political situations bring out continuous alteration and crystallization of its content.[32]

Buber argues that when the tradition emerges through producing and recording sacred history by means of myth, it is

something entirely different in character from a compilation, rectification, and unification of elements from various literary sources. Hence, the famous Wellhausen theory and the techniques of source criticism, according to Buber, are not adequate for studying the period of oral tradition in the history of faith. He asserts that this school of modern Biblical scholarship, often called literary criticism, has not proven that the narrative books, especially the books of the Pentateuch, are a composite work made up of fragments from different "sources." These scholars have only shown, in his judgment, that there are a number of fundamental types of literary activity in the tradition which culminated in the formation of the books of the Bible. Buber explains:

> "The most important of these types are: first, a type based mainly on court prophets, a type interested in the antecedents of the kingdom of David and Solomon; second, a type based mainly on the free prophets, a type interested in the antecedents of the rule of God's Spirit through men seized by it; and third, a type based mainly on priests, a type interested in the antecedents of the sanctuaries, of the holy institutions and the holy customs."[33]

He also points out that the discovery of certain layers of literary development in these "editorial tendencies" will not necessarily coincide with the religious development of any given teaching. It is possible that a primitive religious element would be found in a late literary form although it had been transmitted in oral form for centuries. Buber thinks that the professional students of the Bible need to develop what he calls

"a critique of tradition" in order to uncover the earliest theological elements and the religious development of the Biblical tradition.[34] He says:

> "The student must attempt to penetrate to that original nucleus of saga which was almost contemporary with the initial event. . . . Here the procedure of investigation must necessarily be reductive. It must remove layer after layer from the images as set before it, in order to arrive at the earliest of all."[35]

Two basic criteria are suggested for determining whether the text contains a tradition near to historical events and original experiences:

> "(Firstly,) whenever in the narrative a definite stage in the development of economy and civilisation stands out, a stage specific to the time under description, there the historical core is not far away: the same judgment applies to the eximination of geographical, political, and other data. . . . (Secondly,) there are in the history of religion events, situations, figures, expressions, deeds, the uniqueness of which cannot be regarded as the fruit of thought or song, or as a mere fabrication."[36]

Buber recognizes that he is not outlining a scientific, objective method. He readily admits that in the study of the history of faith we will sometimes need to rely on intuitive judgments and use our imagination in order to understand the historical situation.[37] Nevertheless, by the above method of Biblical study he intends to disclose the "historical core" of the history of faith. Of course, Buber's intentions become rather confusing unless we keep in mind the distinction that he makes between sacred history

and that secular historiography which supposedly records only empirical facts. He is interested only in the essential, historical events of Biblical faith. The Biblical tradition involves religious teaching as well as mythological stories, and Buber also attempts to ascertain the evolution of the religious ideas and images of the Bible. As a student of the history of religions, he recognizes that the first Israelites formulated the early Jewish religion by adopting religious imagery, practices, and teachings from their neighbouring nations of the Near East. He thinks, however, that the early Israelitish tradition still represents a genuinely creative religious life. He says:

> "I personally prefer to leave room for the initiative of the man who can be believed to have had the ability to change both the form and the sense of the symbol already to be found in the world of the Ancient Orient."[38]

Buber places himself in a liberal tradition of Jewish scholarship by the claim that each inidvidual has the right to study and interpret the Bible in accordance with his own conscience. And in the judgment of the Orthodox rabbis he might even appear heretical because of his acceptance of many controversial conclusions of modern Biblical scholarship. It would be misleading to call Buber a conservative Old Testament scholar, however he certainly does not agree with those who take the depressing, radical view that we can know nothing from the Biblical account of the real figures and events of early Jewish history, and that the early Jewish religion has no originality because it was eclectically

copied from the other religions of the Ancient Orient. Buber's studies of the history of faith in the Bible have undoubtedly produced valuable volumes concerning the early Jewish religion and the basic contributions which the major Biblical heroes made to it. The next chapter will summarize some of the main theses arising from his research on the history of faith in the Bible.

CHAPTER X

THE HISTORY OF FAITH IN THE BIBLE

Buber disagrees with Ezekiel Kaufmann who takes the view that monotheism is the unique feature of the religion of Israel, and he also rejects Ben-Gurion's thesis that the combination of religion and ethics distinguishes Israel. Buber points out that belief in one God has developed among a number of peoples and that the unity of religion and ethics is found also in the early teachings of India and Persia. He argues, "What is peculiar to Israel is the demand that the people submit its entire life, including its social and political activity, to the will of God, as the true King."[1] He observes, "Whilst Judaism unfolds itself through the history of its faith, . . . it holds out against the 'religion' which is an attempt to assign a circumscribed part to God, in order to satisfy Him who bespeaks and lays claim to the whole."[2] Buber interprets the history of faith in the Bible as the period in which this distinctive characteristic of Jewish life was originally developed and tested.

"The most important question in the history of Israel's faith," Buber says, is "whence does the deity come and what has he to do with Israel?"[3] He disagrees with the favoured "Kenite

hypothesis" that the God of Israel was originally a mountain god of the Kenite tribe with whom Moses lived before leading the Israelites out of Eygpt. According to this view, Israel did not know of its God in the pre-Mosaic period. In opposition to the hypothesis, Buber argues that it is not a new deity which meets Moses at Sinai and commissions him to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage. This God is the "God of the fathers," the national God of Israel. Among the various argumentsthat he brings against the "Kenite hypothesis," Buber thinks that it is best refuted by the ancient text itself. In the dialogue between God and Moses in the legend of the burning bush the God in question refers twice to the Israelites as "my people." He explains that such repetition is the Biblical way of expressing emphasis, and thus Buber takes the passage to mean that Israel is already His people, although God had not yet designated Himself as their God but as "the God of your fathers."[4] Moreover, it would be artificial and futile, he points out, for Moses to go before the Israelites in Egypt with the words of a deity unknown to them and say, for example, "The god of a mountain in Midian sends me."[5]

But who is the deity of the fathers? Buber explains that this question brings us "to the darkness of the early days" because the patriarchal legends are not "immediate testimony of the history of faith." However, he says:

> "It seems to me a singular phenomenon in the history of religion, that one day in the distant past a certain

> wandering Aramean (Biblical tradition calls him Abram) forsook the faith he had received from his environment (the Babylo-Syrian moon cult), and acquired instead a faith in One Who was no 'nature god.' This was a guardian deity. . . . A God, Who goes with those He guards, not only on moonlit nights, but also on nights, but also on nights without moonlight. . . . A God, Whose light will not be extinguished."[6]

This "great guardian deity" was prepared to give His constant presence to His chosen one whom He called out of the household of his fathers. This deity was, in return, chosen by Abraham, and subsequent patriarchs, as their personal God. Thus, above all, that God became their companion and leader by a covenant of mutual devotion.[7] Now, Buber maintains that the basic elements of the patriarchal faith are continued in the Mosaic period. However, there is one important development in the history of faith which takes place under the leadership of Moses. That which was a covenant and communion between God and only a few patriarchal families becomes the faith of the total nation of Israel. Thus Buber does not naively assume that the Israelites came out of Egypt as one people who already was united in the faith of a few great leaders. Rather, he thinks that Moses stands in the succession of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as the one who founds a new nation upon an existent faith in the "God of the fathers."

In the dialogue at the burning bush Moses asks a question about the name of this God who had addressed him. Moses inquires: _Ma sh'mo?_ Buber explains that the question does not mean: Who are you?" If it were incorrectly translated this way, the question

would indicate that the Israelites did not know anything about a "God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," as the "Kenite hypothesis" supposes. Buber argues that the question should be translated: "What is your name?" And he goes on to explain that the Biblical question which is introduced by "what" always asks about the nature of something.[8] As the reply to his question about the name, Moses is told: Ehyeh asher ehyeh. This phrase has traditionally been translated: "I am that I am," and it was thought to mean that God described Himself as the ultimate Being, or the eternal one whose being never changes. Buber assures us that this is a misleading translation. He explains:

> "The verb in the Biblical language does not carry this particular shade of meaning of pure existence. It means: happening, coming into being, being there, being present, being thus and thus; but not being in an abstract sense."[9]

Thus, Buber translates the phrase: "I shall be there as I shall there be." He interprets it to mean:

> "You need not conjure me, for I am here, I am with you; but you cannot conjure me, for I am with you time and again in the form in which I choose to be with you time and again; I myself do not anticipate any of my manifestations; you cannot learn to meet me; you meet me, when you meet me."[10]

The utterance must be understood, according to him, against the background of the magical practices of Egypt. The Israelites were to learn that they need not, and indeed could not, invoke the presence and aid of their God. He would always be present in order to assist and guide them. Buber supposes that while

residing in Egypt the Israelites had forgotten the guiding function of the ancient God of the patriarchal clan but this is revived in the faith of Moses in Midian when he meditates upon the possibility of bringing the tribes out of Egypt into the desert.[11] Hence, Moses goes to his people in their bondage and proclaims that the God who guided their nomadic ancestors has now chosen also to deliver and lead them forth to a new land. It seems, therefore, Buber claims that the early theology of the history of Jewish faith already reflects the essential feature of the panentheism which characterizes Hasidism and his own neo-Hasidist thought. According to him, God reveals himself to these forefathers of the Jewish religion as the One who is always present in an immediate relation to his chosen ones.

It is interesting to notice that there are some grounds for Bernhard Casper's suggestion that Buber's unorthodox translation of _Ehyeh asher ehyeh_ shows the influence of Franz Rosenzweig.[12] In 1921 in _Der Stern der Erlösung_ Rosenzweig argued that the Hebrew should be translated "Ich werde sein" as opposed to "Ich bin."[13] Now, in the first edition of _Ich und Du_ in 1923 Buber wrote: "Das Wort der Offenbarung ist: Ich bin der ich bin. Das Offendarende is das Offenbarende. Das Seiende ist, nichts weiter."[14] But in a later edition he changed this passage without remark to read: "Das Wort der Offenbarung ist: Ich bin da als ich da bin. Das Offenbarende ist das Offenbarende. Das Seiende ist da, nichts weiter."[15] Hence, the text of _I and Thou_ was brought into

closer conformity with the translation "I shall be there as I there shall be." We cannot explain this revision of I and Thou simply by the influence of Hasidist panentheism because Buber had been a scholar of Hasidism long before writing the first edition of the book. What, then, could have happened after Buber had used "Ich bin" that lead him to prefer a less classical termonology? It seems admissible to suppose that this change occurred in connection with the Bible translation that Buber and Rosenzweig jointly undertook in 1925, two years after the publication of I and Thou. Commenting on their method of working together, Buber says:

> "I translated and sent the sheets of the first version, mostly in chapters, to Rosenzweig. His replies comprised reservations, references, suggested changes. I immediately incorporated those that struck me as once as being good. We discussed the rest by correspondence, and whatever remained controversial we discussed during my Wednesday visits."[16]

It seems likely that the Hebrew phrase under consideration was the subject of such correspondence and discussion, perhaps on more than one occasion. The new translation of Ehyeh asher ehyeh reflects Rosenzweig's rejection of the immutable Being in favour of a living, moving God who constantly reveals Himself to man in everyday life. This is not the process philosopher's God of Becoming but the Word who is present with His people. These two prominent dialogical thinkers probably shared that basic theology from the first, yet Buber's understanding was quite

likely sharpened by Rosenzweig's clear perception of the distinction between infinite Being and the God who abides in His speech.

The next great event in the history of faith in the Bible occurs when the free, liberated people of Israel chose this present One as their Melokh, their King. Moses brings the people to the mountain upon which he had been given his commission, and there the Israelites make a covenant with their God. They make a covenant founded "on the basic fact of rule and service."[17] The covenant entails what Buber calls "the theo-political idea of Moses."[18] He says, "The selfsame hour (Israel becomes) a nation and a religious community."[19] Buber does not mean that God is made the Head of State, nor does he mean to suggest that a priestly class is given political authority over the people of Israel. The Mosaic government is not a hierocracy but a primitive theocracy. God is made the Leader and Head of a confederation of tribes. (This is the original meaning of Melokh, divine kingship, in the West Semitic religions of that period.)[20] Those who believe the "Kenite hypothesis" argue that if the God who delivered the Israelites is the deity with whom the patriarchs had already made a covenant, another one would be superfluous. It would thus stand to reason that a new covenant is being made with a new deity, but Buber interprets the occasion differently. The Mosaic covenant is similar to the earlier covenants of the patriarchal families,

he admits, because it is not merely a contract but "an assumption into a life-relationship, a relationship comprehending the entire life of the men involved."[21] However, the Mosaic covenant makes the all-embracing relationship more than a bond between a patriarchal family and their God. Buber argues that Israel and the "God of the fathers" enter into a new kind of relation to one another by making the Mosaic covenant because a new situation exists. Never before could the tribes gather together in order to be a nation that elects itself a King and submits to His service.[22] This is a unique hour in the sacred history of the people of God.

Buber points out that the Israelites' commitment to their King is personal as well as communal. That is, each one of them stands in an identical direct and immediate relation to their Sovereign. Furthermore, he argues that Israel binds itself not to specific ordinances and laws but to the "will of their Lord who issues His commands in the present and will issue them in the future" in accordance with the demands of future situations.[23] Buber says:

> "The people (of Israel) confronts God and receives, as a people, His never ceasing instruction. It, too, like the individual, is called upon to participate in the realization of the divine Will on earth. Just as the individual is to hallow himself in his personal life, the people is to hallow itself in its communal life."[24]

Therefore, the covenant between Israel and God establishes a unity of nationality and faith at all levels of life. Their

entire existence as a nation must express the kingship of God. Being chosen by God as His people thus means that a difficult task falls to Israel.[25] In Buber's words, "The choice means a charge imposed on them and nothing more; and therefore the choice, so to say, exists only negatively unless the charge is also fulfilled."[26] That charge is, in essence, to transform all human existence, personal and communal, into the kingdom of God.

Buber emphasizes one more feature belonging to the early dialogue between God and His people, and that is the person of the mediator. The words of a mortal man perform the functions of disclosing the One always present, arranging a covenant with Him as absolute King, and conveying the basic instructions for keeping it. Buber says, "The species of man that bears the word from above downwards and from below upwards is called _nabi_, announcer."[27] Abraham and the other forefathers stand at the beginning of the history of Jewish faith; Moses becomes the heir of their faith and establishes the Jewish nation under the kingship of God; Joshua and the Judges try to continue the great theopolitical experiment instigated by Moses. All these men are _nebiim_, the ancestors of the later _nebiim_ whom we call the prophets. Buber acknowledges that the prophetic mission, in the strict sense, belongs to a later and different situation between God and His people, but he points out that these early

charismatic leaders do everything a prophet should in this early era of the history of faith. They are the representatives of God in the dialogue with His people, thus they enunciate His message and command in His name."[28]

After the Israelites conquered and entered Canaan the primitive theocracy with its charismatic leadership becomes increasingly inadequate. Buber explains that time and again the people of Israel, to use the Biblical phrase, fall away from God. Historically and sociologically speaking, this means that periodically the civil order of Israel declines. The attempt to establish a society on pure voluntarism fails.[29] Strong leaders, called the Judges, would spontaneously arise to meet particular internal or external threats, but the defenses and political structure of the tribes lack centralization and continuity. Hence, they are open to attack from the better organized nations around them. Buber suggests that the disintegration of social organization probably comes to a climax when the Philistines defeat the people of Israel. The victors even capture the ark of the covenant which went at the head of the Israelites' army as the "seat" of their King. This national catastrophe, which the people may have been inclined to see as a defeat of their Melekh, represents another turning point in the history of faith.[30] A new type of leadership is demanded, and in the time of Samuel the people eventually choose an earthly king as their national leader. Israel's human king,

according to Buber, is a representative and not a replacement of the true King. God proposes to rule His people through His vicegerent who is anointed in His name and charged to lead the people to realize the kingdom of God. That is to say, the human king bears the responsibility of leading the people of Israel to an affirmation of God's rule over their whole life.[31] But, as Buber interprets the Biblical account, the newly established kingdom with its earthly king fails to accept this responsibility laid upon it. The kings are willing to accept the symbolic sense of the charge and authority from God, but the absolute sovereignty of the divine _Melekh_ is continually reduced to the level of a cult alone. The kings attempt to dispose of the sacredness of the political and social activities by putting them under the sole authority of the State. Hence, the "religion" of the priests and professional prophets replaces the immediate relationship with God in the concrete life of the whole community. The God of Israel becomes the mighty God of heaven, like the great Lord of Heaven in the oriental cosmic myths, rather than the present One who confronts His people with His will in the historical situation.[32] Buber maintains that it is against this tendency to divide Israel's life into two realms, the civil sphere and the religious sphere, that the prophets set up a "theopolitical realism which does not admit any 'religious' subtlety."[33] He views the whole prophetic mission in pre-exilic

Israel as a protest against empty, formal "religion" and against the king who fails to accept God's rule over the whole community life of Israel and the whole life of each Israelite. The prophet also engages in a second battle: it becomes necessary for him to proclaim that the God of Israel is Lord of all nature as well as history in order to combate the Baal cult of Canaanite agriculture.[34] But whether the prophet is fighting Baalism or conventional Jewish "religion," his positive message, in Buber's estimation, demands the fulfilment of the theocratic way of life in which God's love and justice would be imitated by the whole nation. "The idea of following the deity raises itself to the idea of imitating the deity."[35] Becoming the true people of God means, according to the prophetic message, that "the attributes of God revealed to it, justice and love, are to be made effective in its own life."[36] Justice is to be materialized in the indirect, institutional, economic, and political relations of the community, and love is to be actualized in their direct, personal relationships.[37] The responsibility of becoming a godly people is the special mission of Israel among the nations. God has chosen Israel to live out His justice and love on earth, and thus, by way of example, to lead all the peoples of the world to God. This means, in the mind of the prophet, that Israel is a unique people but their God is the one universal deity. He is ultimately the God of all nations even though He has chosen one nation for a

particular mission. Buber emphasizes that the prophets speak of the future not to predict it but to indicate the consequences of not fulfilling the mission which God has given Israel. Nevertheless, the God of Israel refuses to force His people into serving Him. They are always allowed either to turn to God and hallow all human existence or turn against Him and confine their devotion to an empty, rigid religiosity.[38] Buber says:

> "The divine voice chose the prophet, as it were, for its 'mouth,' in order to bring home to man again and again, in the most immediate fashion, his freedom and its consequences. Even when the prophet did not speak in alternative form, but announced unconditionally that after such and such a time the catastrophe would happen, . . . nevertheless (the announcement) contained a hidden alternative."[39]

Therefore, according to Buber's interpretation of the prophetic message, the "theopolitical realism" of the prophets retains the central feature of the earlier "theopolitical idea" of Moses: the kingship of God. And on the basis of the kingship of God the prophets demand that Israel fulfil their special vocation, which could be achieved only by the unity of their "life in God" with all secular life, that is to say, by "hallowing the everyday."

The prophets fervently call for a return to the rule of the divine King who claims every aspect of life as His domain. However, the prophetic voice in Israel is largely unheeded. The occasional reform of righteous kings is not enough to effect an adequate "turning" of the people to God. Because the earthly king is responsible for leading his people to establish the true

kingdom of God on earth, the prophets hold these vicegerents accountable for the failure of Israel. As their trust in God's anointed representative on the throne is continually unrewarded, a new hope emerges in the prophetic circles, the Messianic hope. Buber explains:

> "The Messiah, whether he is regarded more as the man whom God has found, or as the man whom God has sent, is the fulfiller, he who at last fulfils the function of the vicegerent, through whose agency the ordering of the people under (God's) leadership will be realized. . . . He is not nearer to God than what is appointed to man as man; nor does he pass over to the divine side; he too stands before God in indestructible dialogue."[40]

In further explanation of the Messianic vision, Buber says:

> "Around him (the Messianic king), at first, Israel and then the city of Mankind will be built up as the fulfilled kingdom of God. But the latter is not conceived of as conquering and superseding a defective human civilization, but as hallowing, that is to say, purifying and perfecting it. When the life of man, with all its various spheres fully developed, becomes a united whole, hallowed to the divine, then . . . the name of God will be called out over the whole earth as the domain over which he assumes government."[41]

Both the nature of this Messianic age and the method of achieving it will come to mind again when we look at the similar hope of Buber's religious socialism.

In summing up his interpretation of the faith which arises out of Biblical history, Buber says, "If the first Biblical axiom is: 'Man is addressed by God in his life,' the second is: 'The life of man is meant by God as a unity.'"[42] These two axioms constitute that religious ideal which forms

the core of Buber's presentation of Hasidism and his own neo-Hasidist philosophy. In reviewing his study of Hasidism and the I-Thou philosophy, a consistent image of the genuine religious life has taken form. He thinks that true religion consists of a dialogue between man and God. God is everywhere present in man's life addressing him, and all human experience is made sacred by this divine Presence when man attempts to fulfil God's will in everything he does. The next chapter will discuss the ethical nature of man's response to the divine Presence, hence our understanding of his conception of religion is not yet complete. Nevertheless, we may now conclude that Buber's religious ideal has its origin in the history of faith in the Bible as interpreted by him, hence his faith appears to be grounded firmly in the Biblical tradition.

The ideal religious life in Hasidism, the I-Thou philosophy, and Biblical Judaism culminates in the elimination of the partition between the sacred and profane spheres. Now, Buber is not the only twentieth-century, Jewish philosopher who opposes the isolation of religious experience and commends the unity of religion and daily life. Leo Baeck, (1874-1956) another outstanding leader of German Jewry, especially during the Nazi era, writes:

> "In Judaism the attempt has been made to give life its style by causing religion to invade every day and penetrate the whole of every day. Everything is in a sense divine service and has its mood and its dignity (in that service). . . . It does not

> lead man out of his everyday world, but relates him to God within it. Every partition of life into the profane and the sacred is to be avoided."[43]

Kaufmann Kohler, (1843-1926) former president of Hebrew Union College of America and leader of Reform Judaism, believes that "the soul of Jewish religion is ethics," and "Jewish ethics aims at hallowing all of life, individual and social."[44] Basically, Kohler and Baeck present an ethical interpretation of Judaism rather than a dialogical, existential interpretation. However, their conception of the means by which faith claims the everyday life differs little from Buber's thought. That is, man's relation to God has an ethical obligation, and it is fulfilled in our everyday life. But when the leaders of Orthodox Judaism speak of the unity of religion and our daily life, a new factor is added, namely the Halakah, that collection of laws and regulations in Talmudic and later Jewish literature. Joseph Solovitchik, a leader of Orthodoxy in America believes in living under a "Halakhic regimen," as he calls it. Expounding Solovitchik's view, Aharon Lichtenstein writes: "His approach emphasizes the integration of all parts of living into a unified, religious framework. It knows no dualism and recognizes no dichotomy between the religious and secular."[45] The unity of religion and daily life is achieved by following a set of laws which cover all areas of human life. The Orthodox Jews believe:

> "To be a Jew is to be a member of a community, committed to a specific regimen. It means

> thinking, feeling, acting in accordance with a particular normative pattern, trying to govern oneself through every walk of life by a complex detail of comprehensive laws. . . . (This) Halakhic way of life constitutes our central Jewish heritage."[46]

Thus, we see that a different conception of Jewish life lies behind Solvitchik's claim that Judaism makes no dichotomy between religion and the secular world. We might say that to be a Jew, from Buber's point of view, means commitment to a Hasidist way of life rather than a Halakhic way of life. Solovitchik, like most Jewish thinkers, places the Law at the centre of Jewish religion; Baeck and Kohler accept the Law as at least vital to the Jewish faith, but Buber reduces the Halakah, as we will find in chapter eleven, to a peripheral status. Nevertheless, these prominent leaders of Reform and Orthodox Judaism agree with Buber's conviction that the unity of religion and everyday life belongs to the essence of Judaism.

CHAPTER XI

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY

Buber observes that there are two fundamental types of faith but various contents which complete the two basic forms. These types of faith correspond to the two realities, I-It and I-Thou. One type of faith involves a personal relationship in which we trust someone, whereas the other type consists of an impersonal relation to a fact which we acknowledge to be true.[1] Buber explains that the two types of faith mutually complete one another:

> "The contact in trust leads naturally to the acceptance of that which proceeds from the one whom I trust. The acceptance of the truth acknowledged by me can lead to contact with the one whom it proclaims. But in the former instance it is the existent contact which is primary, in the latter the acceptance accomplished."[2]

Now, he says that "faith in the religious sense is one or the other of these two types in the sphere of the unconditioned."[3] That is, the man of faith primarily seeks contact with either an absolute Person or a supreme Truth. In one type the man of faith finds himself in a religious relationship because he is a member of a community that includes him in its covenant with the unconditional One. In contrast, the other type of faith arises from individuals being converted to a truth, and these

men of common persuasion join together to form a community. Further, these individuals might aspire to an intense mystical or personal relationship with the religious figure who is the object of their faith.[4]

Buber employs this analysis of the experience of faith as the basic framework for his comparative study of Judaism and Christianity. He argues that the type of faith found in Israel and the original Christian community, in so far as we know about it from the Synoptics, is quite different from the later faith that developed in Hellenistic Christianity. Following the lead of some Christian theologians, Buber maintains that the Christ of the Johannine and Pauline theologies has little in common with the life and teachings of the historical Jesus. Buber says:

> "If we consider the Synoptic and Johannine dialogues with the disciples as two stages along one road, we immediately see what was gained and lost in the course of it. The gain was the most sublime of all theologies; it was procured at the expense of the plain, concrete and situation-bound dialogicism of the original man of the Bible, who found eternity, not in the super-temporal spirit, but in the depth of the actual moment. The Jesus of the genuine tradition still belongs to that, but the Jesus of theology does so no longer."[5]

Hence, Buber includes "the Jesus of the genuine tradition" in the history of Biblical faith, which we reviewed in chapter nine. He refers to Jesus as "a great son of Israel."[6] In <u>I and Thou</u> Buber says with evident admiration for this fellow-Jew:

> "How powerful, even to being overpowering, and how legitimate, even to being self-evident, is the saying

> of I by Jesus! For it is the I of unconditional relation in which the man calls his Thou Father in such a way that he himself is simply Son, and nothing else but Son. Whenever he says I he can only mean the I of the holy primary word that has been raised for him into unconditional being. If separation ever touches him, his solidarity of relation is the greater; he speaks to others only out of this solidarity. . . . I and Thou abide; every man can say Thou and is then I, every man can say Father and is then Son; reality abides."[7]

According to Buber, the faith of Jesus and his Jewish people would be described best as Emunah, which means "trust resulting from an original relationship to the Godhead."[8] In the words of the above quotation, every faithful Jew (not that Gentiles are necessarily excluded) is a Son of the Father, and Buber apparently thinks that Jesus shared in this faith-relation to a large extent. We should not, however, ignore the quite critical remarks that Buber makes about Him. In spite of Buber's admiration for Jesus, he never speaks of himself as a follower of Jesus in any way. The above remarks about Jesus from I and Thou cannot be taken as a Good Confession of Christian faith. In fact, in a passage apart from his study of Christianity, Buber writes:

> "I would not deny that although I should not have been among the crucifiers of Jesus, I should also not have been among his supporters. For I cannot help withstand evil when I see that it is about to destroy the good."[9]

It is only the context of this statement that gives the misleading impression that Jesus is called "evil." Buber seems to believe,

nevertheless, that something destructive to the Jewish faith already began with Jesus himself, but what was it? Buber sees three principles in Jesus' message as presented by the gospel of Mark: "realization of the kingship, the effecting of turning to God, and a relationship of faith towards Him."[10] Hence, in his judgment, the preaching of Jesus extends the prophetic concern for a return to the true kingship of God. Buber finds no offence here, however he thinks that Jesus distorts the genuine prophetic tradition by accepting the viewpoint of the Jewish apocalyptic literature of the inter-testamental period. In the essay, "Prophecy, Apocalyptic, and the Historical Hour," Buber says:

> "Prophecy and apocalyptic . . . are unique manifestations in the history of the human spirit and of its relationship to transcendence. Prophecy originates in the hour of the highest strength and fruitfulness of the Eastern spirit, the apocalyptic out of the decadence of its cultures and religions."[11]

Of course, Buber does not reduce the historical Jesus to an apocalyptic visionary. He knows that Jesus calls upon men to repent and return to God for the sake of hallowing the historical situation, but it appears that Jesus also turns away from history in the expectation of a suprahistorical redemption. In the final analysis, perhaps Buber would class Jesus' teachings among the "many noteworthy mixed forms (that) lead from the historical sphere into that of apocalyptic."[12]

Like Leo Baeck, author of Judaism and Christianity,

Buber thinks that Jesus' teachings and central Farisaism belong essentially to one another.[13] He argues that the thought of Jesus and the Pharisaical teachings are fundamentally related to "that critical process within Judaism which attempts to prevent the Torah, the ever-present instruction of God, from becoming a static, separate objectivum.[14] The Pharisees and Jesus similarly believe that "the Torah (is) capable of fulfilment, not merely in accordance with its working, but in the original intention of its revelation."[15] They teach that "fulfilment of the Torah means to extend the hearing of the Word to the whole dimension of human existence."[16] They both believe, according to Buber, that the foundation of Jewish piety is what he calls "direction of the heart" towards God,[17] and "the Torah has assigned to man actions agreeable to God, in the doing of which he learns to direct his heart to Him."[18] Now, Buber explains that Jesus' teachings differ from the Pharisees' in that he approaches the living Torah from "the point of view of his eschatological radicalism."[19] The Pharisees expect to live under the rule of Romans, and they are willing to compromise with the weakness of man. Consequently, they maintain that man should fulfil the Torah according to his capabilities, and no more is required. But Jesus preaches that the catastrophic coming of the reign of God is near at hand, and all Israel must prepare for the event by attaining a holiness that would otherwise

be considered impossible.[20] Buber points out that St. Paul opposes both the teachings of Jesus and the Pharisaical doctrine because he does not believe that the Torah is capable of fulfillment at all. Nevertheless, Paul argues that God brings man to grace through faith in Christ. Buber says:

> "The answer which Paul gave to the life-question of the man who came from the world of 'law' and wanted to attain to true life in the revealed will of God and the answer with which he anticipated this question was the summons to have faith in Christ. In this way he did precisely what Jesus, in so far as we know him from the Synoptic tradition, did not do, and whatever was the case with his 'messianic consciousness,' obviously did not with to do."[21]

Buber welcomes Wissmann's statement: "The faith which for Paul and his congregation constitutes the essence of a Christian is above all entirely believing (fuerwahr haltender) faith." But Buber adds that Wissmann considers quite wrongly that this is the essence of late-Judaic religion, for "believing faith," or Pistis as Buber refers to it, developed only in Hellenistic Judaism and in Hellenistic Christianity.[22] According to Buber, Pauline theology is a prime example of Hellenistic Christianity and therefore a travesty and perversion of the Jewish heritage of which Jesus is a part. To sum up, Buber conceives of Jesus as a preacher in the tradition of the prophets and a radical teacher in the tradition of the Pharisees. Although Jesus seriously alters as well as continues his Jewish heritage, in Buber's judgment, Jesus does not teach his own divinity. The

process of deification can be attributed to the myth-making imagination of his followers who develop a new religion and another type of faith. This early Christian theology is rooted in the kind of Messianism that prevailed in the first century.

Buber explains that the figure of the Messiah of Israel changes twice in the pre-Christian period without however the new configuration supplanting the old one. The old, pre-exilic conception remains the dominant image of the Messiah, and the new features are incorporated into it. The original Messianic hope was explained in chapter nine; as the kings fail to fulfil their task as the vicegerents of God, the prophets turn to the expectation of the "coming one" who will finally establish the kingship of God in the total life of Israel. Later, when even the Judaean Kingdom falls to the invading armies and the whole people of God are in exile, the commission of the Messiah takes on an added dimension. That is, the people must first be lead back to their land, and then the Messiah can establish the new community of Israel under the kingship of God. The first act is appointed to Cyrus, a foreign prince chosen by God as the saviour of His people. The second charge is laid upon the "servant of JHVH" who is the suffering prophet. The "suffering servant" takes upon himself the sin and guilt of the nations, thus preparing for the final Messianic fulfilment, yet this one who publically ushers in the Kingdom of God is hidden and known only by God.[23]

Buber points out that the pre-exilic form of the Messianic king and the exilic form of the prophetic "servant" represent ordinary men whom God has chosen for His special work in history, but this feature of the Messianic vision changes when the Jews endure the further sufferings of the inter-testamental period and when the Jewish apocalyptic literature emerges. Buber says, "People tended then not merely to despair of the saving achievement of the king, but of that of earthly man in general. The world can no longer be redeemed by the world."[24] In the Book of Daniel the Messiah takes the form of "one like to man," the eschatalogical representative of Israel. And in the Book of Enoch the image develops into a heavenly pre-existent being whose election had taken place before the creation of the world. Although the Messiah is still thought of as an historical figure who suffers for the sake of the Kingdom, he is simultaneously venerated as a heavenly being who possesses supernatural powers.[25]

Now, Buber says that Jesus appears to conceive of his own life in terms of the Messianic office of suffering for the preparation of the coming of the Kingdom. It is even possible that Jesus looks upon himself as the "hidden one" who would come forth in glory to establish the kingship of God over the whole world. Therefore, if a "Messianic consciousness" should be attributed to Jesus, it would centre in the exilic form of the "suffering servant."[26] But whether Jesus thinks of himself as

the Messiah or whether his followers later proclaim him Messiah, in the final analysis, does not concern Buber. It is important, however, that Jesus occupies the position of divine Messiah, the anointed One, the Christ, because the elevation of Jesus to that office marks the point at which the history of Biblical faith becomes Christian rather than Jewish, in the judgment of Buber. The Christian religion forsakes its Jewish tradition in several ways. Buber claims that the true Messiah of the Jewish faith always remains the "hidden one." He suffers and fulfils the work to which God appoints him without being singled out as one worthy of worship and acclaim. Hence, Buber dismisses the Christian Messiah as the first, and perhaps the greatest, in a long line of pseudo-Messiahs, like Sabbatai Zevi and Jacob Frank.[27] Secondly, the history of the Christian faith at an early stage includes the deification of the Messianic man. Buber suggests that the divinity of Christ originates in the development of the legend of the resurrection which, he points out, has an analogy in the Mysteries of the Hellenistic world but not in the Jewish heritage. The Greeks believe in the single resurrection of a god-man but the Jews believe in mass resurrection alone. Buber also says that the divine Christ is different from the Messianic figures of the Jewish Apocalypse. The Christians soon develop myths which present their Messiah as an eternal being of heaven who descends and enters a human form but ascends again after the

resurrection.[28] In contrast, the Book of Enoch represents the Messiah as having a heavenly, pre-existent form but he remains a human person. The Jewish Messiah arises from humanity and is never a deity. Thirdly, the early Christian theologians adopt a Hellenistic rather than Jewish conception of faith. Christianity is grounded, according to Buber, not in a personal relation of trust in God but in the acceptance of certain propositions of truth about Christ. He calls this type of faith Christian *Pistis* which is essentially different from Jewish *Emunah*.[29] Christian *Pistis* takes form as an intensification of apocalyptic Messianism and an adaptation of Hellenistic religion. Buber concludes, then, that post-resurrection Christianity and Biblical Judaism are two different types of faith. Thus, they naturally develop separate doctrines of revelation, redemption, and ethics, and they have a different relation to the State. We now turn to a discussion of these main points of thought which separate the two great Faiths.

In summing up an address to a Christian mission to the Jews, Buber says that the "Jewish soul" has "two foci:"

> "(These) continue to exist for the 'secularised' Jew too, in so far as he has not lost his soul. They are, first, the immediate relationship to the Existent One, and second, the power of atonement at work in an unatoned world. In other words, first, the non-incarnation of God who reveals himself to the 'flesh' and is present to it in a mutual relationship, and second, the unbroken continuity of human history, which turns

> toward fulfilment and decision. These two centers constitute the ultimate division between Judaism and Christianity."[30]

Thus, he concludes that the doctrines of revelation and redemption are the two greatest theological barriers between the Jew and the Christian. The Christian believes, in Buber's estimation, that God has decisively revealed Himself to man in the Incarnation which establishes the centre of history. The living Word of God in our personal history must always be secondary because the Christ reveals eternally and finally the historical Word of God. Hence, for the Christian the invisible God is manifest in the image of the historical Christ, and divine revelation can ultimately take no other form. Christian piety thus becomes an Imitatio Christi, which consists of an imitation of a "life-history." Buber says, "We need only transfer ourselves from mediacy to immediacy, from imitation of Jesus to his imitation of our Father, and we are standing on Jewish soil."[31]

> "The God of Israel is the One to Whom (a Jew) is related by an exclusive immediate Emunah . . . as one can only (have) to One who cannot be represented, which means One who cannot be confined to any outward form."[32]

Buber claims that the true, living God is imageless for "an image means fixing to one manifestation,"[33] and the God of Israel reveals Himself in nature and history in a form that changes with ever situation. This is not a universal incarnation but an ever-present, formless theophany, an immediate, spontaneous

relation to the invisible, incomprehensible God. To speak figuratively, Buber is saying that the Christian remains out in the Court of the Gentiles but the Jew dwells in the Holy of Holies.[34]

Buber explains that the Jew experiences salvation everywhere but he is still intensely aware of the world's lack of redemption. He believes that the complete atonement of the world is a responsibility that man shares with God. It is every man's task to re-create and to hallow the immediate world in which he lives. Buber says that, unlike the Christian faith, Judaism accepts no saviour with whom a new redeemed history began at a definite point in history. The Christian believes that salvation is basically obtained by receiving the grace of God through Christ. But redemption, from the perspective of the Jew, does not occur in one historical figure; it is in the constant dialogue between man and God. His whole being and the whole world must be brought into this relation of trust and grace. Buber acknowledges that both religions accept the necessary incompleteness of any salvation which we experience in our temporal existence. But he argues that the Jew resists the Christian conception of "a divine splitting of existence."

> "He resists most passionately the awful notion of a *massa perditionis*. The God in whom he believes has not created the totality in order to let it split apart into one blessed and one damned half. God's eternity is not to be conceived by man; but -and this we Jews know until the moment of our death-

> there can be no eternity in which everything will not be accepted into God's atonement, when God has drawn time back into eternity."[35]

Lastly, the Jewish religion opposes the Christian approach of setting "religious affairs" apart from the profane sphere of civil life. Buber explains that this characteristic of Christianity results from its origin and its type of faith. When a first century Christian was convinced of the truths of Christian faith, the convert was sharply separated thereby from the community of his nation whether it was Jewish, Roman, or Greek. He became a member of a newly-established community, which by its nature was not a nation. Buber says:

> "The conception of the 'holy nation' in its strict sense has faded altogether, it does not enter into consciousness of Christendom, and soon that of the Church takes its place. . . . Therefore those who believe in Christ possessed at every period a twofold being."[36]

The Christian lives before God primarily as an individual. His religious life remains a private experience mediated by the Christ and supported by the Christian community which is set apart in society as the centre of "religion." But as a citizen of a nation, he participates in the larger community of social, economic and political activities. In contrast, the Jewish *Emunah* originated in the experiences of a young nation which made no distinction between faith and politics, religion and society. And Buber writes that today "the personal *Emunah* of every individual (Jew) remains embodied in that of the nation and draws its strength

from the living memory of generations in the great leadings of early times."[37] He claims that the life of the Jewish people can never be legitimately broken up into a religious community and a secular nation which are structurally but not organically bound together.[38]

Taking a critical view, it seems to me that Buber's comparison of Judaism and Christianity often does little more than set the Christian faith over against his own religious ideal. He claims that the Jew has an immediate, personal relation to God through his life in the world, but the Christian faith is based on merely an assent to a truth about Christ. The Jewish relation to God is directly united with the ethical life. That is, the Jew is guided by the divine imperatives of the historical situation, while the Christian only imitates a "life-history" of the past. Whereas the Jew's civil life and his dialogue with God form a unified religious experience of the total community, the Christian's life is inevitably divided into two separate spheres, the State and the Church.

Buber's comparative study is not, in my opinion, a worthy contribution to the study of religions. He has the right to interpret Judaism as essentially Emunah, but the Christian will certainly be offended by Buber's treatment of the Christian faith. He casts St. Paul and western Christianity into the completely inadequate category of Pistis, and thus Buber

presents only a crude caricature of the faith of the great Apostle and the men who followed in his tradition. On one hand a caricature always fails to express the subtlety and variety of its subject's qualities, but on the other hand a caricature accentuates a pronounced feature of its subject. Hence, Buber's study of Christian religiosity correctly exposes a prominent Hellenistic element. That fact, however, does not justify his claim that Christianity centres in Hellenistic _Pistis_ as opposed to the Jewish _Emunah_. Buber concludes his comparative study as follows:

> "The faith of Judaism and the faith of Christendom are by nature different in kind, each in conformity with its human basis, and they will indeed remain different, until mankind is gathered in from the exiles of the 'religions' into the Kingship of God."[39]

However, Buber somewhat qualifies his conclusion by admitting that "we are allowed to anticipate in our thought that . . . there is a way which leads from rigid Paulinism to another form of _Pistis_ nearer to _Emunah_."[40] That which Buber calls "rigid Paulinism" is the exception and not the rule in the Christian tradition. The great theologians who have inspired the Church through the centuries present a Christian faith that is a "form of _Pistis_ nearer to _Emunah_." Furthermore, we learn from Rudolf Bultmann that Buber's picture of "rigid Paulinism," _i.e._ a Hellenistic Christian faith based on nothing more than conversion to a Christological point of view, does

not fairly represent the theology of the Apostle to the Gentiles.

Bultmann writes:

> "Looked at in terms of the history of ideas, the proclamation of Jesus and that of Paul are essentially the same. Thus their idea of God is the same: God is the Judge and also the God of grace; and similar also is their view of man, who is obligated to obey the will of God and as a sinner is dependent on God's grace. . . . for both men God deals with man in history. The difference, however, is that Jesus proclaims a final and decisive act of God, the Reign of God, as coming or, indeed, as now breaking in, while Paul affirms that the turn of the aeon has already taken place and, to be sure, with the coming, the death and resurrection of Jesus. Thus, for Paul, it is Jesus' cross and resurrection that are the decisive event of salvation through which the forgiveness of sins, the reconciliation of man with God is effected, and with which, therefore, the new creation is introduced. Consequently, while the person and history of Jesus do indeed constitute a presupposition of his theology, they do not do so from the standpoint of their historical or ideal content, but rather as the act of God, as the occurrence of the revelation of salvation. Paul does not teach other and new ideas from those that Jesus teaches, but rather teaches us to understand an event in a new way."[41]

Therefore, it is incorrect, according to Bultmann, to say that "faith" for Jesus is nothing other than simple trust in God, whereas, for Paul, it is faith in Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen Lord. And this is exactly the mistaken division that Buber makes between Jesus and Paul, and between Jesus and the Christian faith. Both Jesus and the Apostle proclaimed the forgiveness of God. Jesus preached that God's grace is now available for the repentant sinner, and Paul says nothing else than that in Jesus God has unmistakably spoken his word of forgiving grace for everyone who will take refuge in him.[42] Bultmann says: "If Paul, like the earliest community, saw in Jesus the Messiah,

he did nothing other than affirm Jesus' own claim that man's destiny is decided with reference to his person."[43] Thus both Jesus and Paul demanded faith in the sense of _Pistis_, Jesus demanded faith in his word and Paul in Jesus' person. But the proclamation of both men accounts for only the initial step of a faith that culminates in a new relation of trust between man and God. Bultmann maintains that, for both Paul and Luther, "faith is the trust in God that arises precisely where --to the eyes of man-- there is nothing but darkness, but death."[44] And such trust presupposes "the acknowledgment of the way of the cross as the way of life."[45] Therefore, if Bultmann is right, and I think that he is, the Christian religion enfolds both types of faith. Contrary to Buber's opinion, the faith of Jesus, Paul, and such figures as Luther, represents a "form of _Pistis_ nearer to _Emunah_." In fact, to be more precise, Christian faith is a type of _Emunah_ that presupposes _Pistis_. That is to say, the form of _Pistis_ that one finds in Christianity is a response to the _Kerygma_, a response that means to establish a relationship of trust and grace between God and man. Thus the Christian enters a genuine I-Thou relation with the eternal Thou whom Jesus proclaimed as the Judge and forgiving Father of mankind. Jesus not only points us to the eternal Thou, he also directs us to the I-Thou relation with our neighbour. The love of God bears with it the responsibility of living for others. Certainly it

was this view of Christian life that was taught by Paul and other leaders of the New Testament community. Again, we refer to Bultmann's study of St. Paul:

> "It was not his view that the faith in which man stands alone before God tears him out of his relations with his fellow men. On the contrary, the man of faith is to rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep (Rom. 12: 15). . . . For self-surrender through the cross means positively that the man who no longer wills to be for himself exists for others. . . . his faith is active in love (Gal. 5: 6)."[46]

Hence, our Christian existence in faith is not divided into sacred and profane spheres out of an inner necessity, as Buber suggests. Rather Christianity is a faith for living in the world, the personal world of I-Thou relations and the wider world of It. The Christian finds his vocation wherever he goes in the world, and he certainly means to obey the voice of God in the everyday situation. Moreover, he employs the teachings of Jesus in discerning the voice of God in the immediate situation. Unlike Buber, the Christian is not afraid of moral codes and dogmas. These aspects of religion are incorporated within the over-arching faith-relation to the eternal Thou. In other words, Pistis is no threat to Emunah in the life and faith of the Christian. Both types of faith complement each other, and thus they are both brought to their completion.

In his introduction to Two Types of Faith Buber mentions his indebtedness to Schweitzer as well as to Bultmann, and there

is ample evidence of such influence on his Biblical research. Yet Buber unfortunately has not learned his lessons about Paul very well from these two eminent Christian scholars. In the book, The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, Albert Schweitzer cogently argues that Paul had his roots in the Jewish world of thought, not in the Greek. Schweitzer concludes that "Paul was not the Hellenizer of Christianity. But in his eschatological mysticism of the Being-in-Christ he gave it a form in which it could be Hellenized."[47] Buber acknowledges but dismisses Schweitzer's study with the remark: "I however can connect the Pauline doctrine of faith only with a peripheral Judaism, which was actually 'Hellenistic.'"[48] In my opinion, the fault lies with Buber's inadequate comprehension of Christian faith rather than with St. Paul or his late interpreter, Albert Schweitzer, for Pistis and Emunah seem to have come together in the faith of the followers of Jesus both in the New Testament and in our century. In fact, it seems to me that a religion based on Emunah alone would be quite inadequate. Buber's attempt to interpret the true Jewish faith as Emunah, and Hellenistic Judaism and Christianity as a declension of the genuine Biblical tradition reflects his lack of appreciation for the place of dogma in religion. The Christian can affirm with him the central importance of the life of I and Thou, but we also recognize that theological statements are an inherent part of the New

Testament faith and the total Christian heritage. Christian doctrines give a framework in which man can search for the meaning of human community and our relation to Transcendence. To be sure, man conceptualizes his religious experiences differently under changing historical and cultural circumstances. These Christian ideas not only vary but even contradict each other at times. That does not matter, however, because theology is a means to an end, that end being an appropriation of grace and an existential commitment to authentic life in the world. We might say that our Emunah is proclaimed and celebrated by manifold Pistis, yet the Christian tradition is made richer by it. If there are two types of faith, I put it to Buber that a religion is most complete when both are integrated into its nature.

CHAPTER XII

THE PROBLEM OF LIVING UNDER THE JEWISH LAW

Buber explains in a letter to Rosenzweig that in his heart the Jewish Law is judged by the criterion, "Is the Law God's Law?"[1] This question can be interpreted to mean: "To what extend is the Jewish Law a part of the Biblical dialogue between man and God? Are they God's command in my present situation?" After stating the basis on which he determines the validity and relevance of the Law of traditional Judaism, Buber goes on to explain:

> "If the answer were 'Yes,' I would not meditate on whether the Law is a force making for the wholeness of life, for such would then be immaterial. On the other hand, no other 'Yes' can replace the missing affirmation. This missing 'Yes' is not quietly absent; its absence is noted with terror."[2]

In Rosenzweig's essay, "The Builders," he publicly reproaches Buber for not accepting the Jewish Law as a universal to be performed according to one's ability to do so. Perhaps it should be mentioned that Rosenzweig was unwilling to publish the essay for some time because of his friendship with Buber, and their dispute over the Jewish Law occurred in private letters which were published decades later. Rosenzweig's essay is written as a response to Buber's _Reden über das Judentum._

Nahum Glatzer explains:

> "Martin Buber dealt, among other issues, with the problem of the study of Judaism. He opposed the distinction between what is 'essential' and what is 'nonessential' in Jewish learning. Much to often the 'essential' became that body of ethical and general human sayings in Judaism. Buber advocated more thorough immersion into the literary sources of Judaism, an endeavor on the part of the student to become a 'link in the chain of tradition.' Only then would that student be in a position to make an authentic, personal choice from the accumulated knowledge of the centuries. No one can know in advance what in the 'vast material of learning' will turn out to be 'teaching,' that is, the source of immediate, relevant, life-shaping instruction. But to reach this goal, the long arduous road through 'learning' must be taken."[3]

Now, in <u>The Builders</u> Rosenzweig draws a parallel on the basis of the above ideas between performance of Jewish laws and the learning of Jewish teachings. He wants Buber to accept the entire Law on the same grounds that he advocates the study of all Jewish teachings. Glatzer says:

> "Rosenzweig does not advocate the Orthodox approach of total commitment to the Law, but a choice based, however, on the actual experience of living under the Law. Only in action (and not before) can we realize the scope of our ability to act and to act meaningfully, just as only in the process of 'learning' can we realize what we personally can accept as 'teaching.'"[4]

But Buber replies to this argument: "The analogy you suggest does not exist. . . . I am responsible for what I do or leave undone in a different way than for what I learn or leave unlearned."[5] Hence, he does not share Rosenzweig's willingness to live under the whole Law before it becomes meaningful in

actual living. Buber admits that the Jewish laws are a revered corpus of his religious tradition but he frankly states that many of those laws have no meaning and value for him. His complete rejection of his friend's proposal indicates that Buber thought it would be dishonest, even self-contradictory, for him to pretend otherwise. These are the sentiments he expresses in the following excerpt from one of the last letters to Rosenzweig. His words bear a frankness and finality that must startle any serious-minded Jew.

> "I cannot admit the law transformed by man into the realm of my will, if I am to hold myself ready as well for the unmediated word of God directed to a specific hour of my life. It is part of my being that I cannot accept both together and I cannot imagine that this position will ever change for me. Other people may have a different attitude. This, though appearing incomprehensible to me, nevertheless I respect."[6]

Even under considerable pressure from close friends, like Franz Rosenzweig, this non-adherence to Jewish laws and observances continued to characterize Buber's religious life. His reluctance to living under the Law was evidently based on strong convictions which caused him, we might surmise, much anxiety at times, for in an above quotation he says that his lack of appreciation for the Law was "noted with terror." Thus, we are led to ask, what rationale did Buber have to support him in his radical and unpopular relation to the religious laws of the Jewish people? The main reason is concisely stated by Buber himself in his

correspondence with Rosenzweig. He writes: "I do not believe that revelation is ever a formulation of law. It is only through man in his self-contradiction that revelation becomes legislation."[7] Thus, there seems to be some grounds for Arthur Cohen's accusation that Buber reduces the Halakah to an "illicit deduction of imperatives from the deeply private encounter of the 'relational event.'"[8] In contrast, Cohen would posit the tradition of commandments as the foundation of the Jew's dialogue with God. "Revelation is preeminently the disclosure of divine intention," Cohen states. "As such, it is rich with content."[9] "Revelation is the call to meeting, but it is not idential with the meeting itself, as Buber insists."[10] Cohen believes that "the act of meeting (I-Thou) is the act whereby each man accepts for himself the word of God."[11] In reply to Cohen, Maurice Friedman wrote an article in which he correctly criticizes Cohen's use of the I-Thou philosophy in his conception of the relation between the Law and revelation. Friedman says: "Despite his assertion that he accepts the 'I-Thou' philosophy, Cohen ends by subordinating 'I-Thou' to 'I-It,' the direct, reciprocal dialogue with God to the secure and 'objective' truth of subject-object relationship."[12] Friedman, however, does not suggest a more adequate position as an alternative to the two extremes offered by Buber and Cohen. Buber says that our I-Thou meeting with God precedes the Law, and Cohen that it follows the Law. Buber claims that there is

no revelation with legislation, and Cohen answers there is none without it. Buber reacts against Jewish Orthodoxy by setting the I-Thou relation over against the Law, and Cohen opposes him merely by arguing that the "relational event" is dependent on the Law. It seems to me that there is a place for a third suggestion, namely that the I and Thou experience is able to embrace both immediate revelation and moral legislation. Cohen is fundamentally taking exception to a fault in Buber's religious philosophy that we dealt with in chapter eight. In Buber's mind the Law poses the same threat to the human-divine encounter as dogmas and rituals. In his zeal to protect our freedom before God and our spontaneous response to His divine will, Buber tends to depreciate unnecessarily the prescribed and permanent order of the religious establishment. In order to correct his limited perspective, we suggested that dogmas and rituals could be viewed as Geistige Wesenheiten. If we were to look upon moral laws in the same way, the I-Thou philosophy of religion would not be contradicted, and furthermore we would be able to include a wider scope of religious experience within it. In light of the following statement this suggestion does not seem to far from Buber's frame of mind. He writes:

> "My own belief in revelation. . . does not mean that I believe that finished statements about God (and his will) were handed down from heaven to earth. Rather it means that the human substance is melted by the spiritual fire which vists it, and there now breaks

> forth from it a word, a statement, which is human in its meaning and form, human conception and human speech, and yet witnesses to Him who stimulated it and to His will."[13]

This sounds to me like a good description of the process in religion whereby we come to possess "spirit in phenomenal form," which is the meaning of Geistige Wesenheiten. Although Buber purposly left such a conclusion unexpressed in his writings, we could still say that the formulation of human conceptions, such as the Halakah, constitutes a natural and wholesome part of the process of revelation called the dialogical relation between man and God. To use the metaphors of the above quotation, the Halakah could be viewed as that "human conception and human speech" which "breaks forth" from the "spiritual fire" from "heaven." Thus, one could argue that moral laws of Halakhic origin, like dogmas and rituals, make up part of the spiritual world through which we encounter the divine address to man in human form. The godlessness of the Law is only Buber's private judgment, a judgment that primarily reflects his own inability to appreciate his full Jewish tradition. Now, a Christian must not let himself be influenced by Buber without hesitation. Because he sets the Law aside, does not mean that Buber accepts the Christian approach to ethics. It is important for the Christian and Jew alike to uphold the validity and authority of objective moral standards. It seems to me that one could argue from the viewpoint of both the Jewish and Christian religions that moral values properly

exist in two forms, both the relational event of revelation and the conceptual form of codes and maxims. This line of argument will be taken up again after we have reviewed the type of Jewish morality that Buber puts in the place of adherence to moral legislation.

Buber believes that Jewish morality ought to be nothing less than Imitatio Dei.[14] However, he takes seriously the implications which the so-called "death of God" has for ethical values. He recognizes that it is difficult to talk about Imitatio Dei.....post Mortem Dei. The "death of God" means in part that many no longer believe in the absoluteness of moral norms and the divine source of ethical standards. Hence, Buber frankly states, "It is an idle undertaking to call out, to a mankind that has grown blind to eternity: 'Look! the eternal values!'"[15] He thinks that the situation is deplorable, and he refers to the "blindness" as a "disease" of a "dominant human type of our age." "But we must not deceive ourselves," Buber says, "by believing that the disease can be cured by formulas which assert that nothing is really as the sick person imagines."[16] He believes that we must partly accept, and work from, the situation of ethical agnosticism. Of course, this places a serious limitation on the moral philosopher who believes in God, and Buber willingly admits that his ethical philosophy will lose a certain type of religious authority for the sake of being realistic and relevant.

He explains:

> "We cannot conceal from ourselves that we stand today on the ruins of the edifice whose towers were raised by Kant. It is not given to us living today to sketch the plan for a new building. But we can perhaps begin by laying the first foundations without a plan, with only a dawning image before our mind's eye."[17]

Now, what are the "first foundations," according to Buber? The beginning point of his ethical philosophy seems to consists of shifting the primary source of moral obligation from eternal, abstract maxims to the immanent, concrete situation. He affirms that God commands and instructs us in the daily situation. In the Postscript to I and Thou Buber writes:

> "God's speech to men penetrates what happens in the life of each one of us, and all that happens in the world around us, biographical and historical, and makes it for you and me into instruction, message, demand."[18]

He means that God is everywhere present in the world calling the man of faith to holy living. God's personal address to man is a moral imperative. Buber thus includes within the I-Thou philosophy his theology, philosophical anthropology, philosophy of religion, conception of history, interpretation of Biblical Judaism, and his ethical philosophy. Furthermore, he again emulates the Hasidim, for they too believe, according to his interpretation, that ethical obligations are founded in their immediate relationship with God.[19] But what is the status of moral values, maxims and laws in his ethical philosophy?

Buber avoids the two extremes of atheistic existentialism

and Jewish Orthodoxy. Hence, he objects to Sartre's argument:

> "If I have done away with God the father (si j'ai supprimé Dieu le père), someone is needed to invent values (pour inventer les valeurs). . . . Life has no meaning *a priori*. . . . It is up to you to give it a meaning, and value is nothing else than this meaning which you choose."[20]

Buber claims, to the contrary:

> "One can believe in and accept a meaning and value, one can set it as a guiding light over one's life if one has discovered it, not if one has invented it. It can be for an illuminating meaning, a direction-giving value only if it has been revealed to me in my meeting with Being, not if I have freely chosen it for myself from among the existing possibilities and perhaps have in addition decided with some fellow-creatures: This shall be valid from now on."[21]

Hence, he believes in what might be called a discovered value and revealed meaning. However, Buber rejects the view of Jewish Orthodoxy that the Law constitutes such revelation and thus provides man with adequate moral guidance for everyday situations. The Orthodox scholars maintain that God reveals the Law originally, and thereafter man implements it by inspired interpretation. R. Joseph Soloveitchi, a contemporary spokesman for progressive Orthodoxy, teaches that

> "collective Torah scholarship half perceives and half creates the blueprint of the ideal temporal life. It is, from the beginning was intended to be, partly divine and partly human handiwork. Its basic design consists of a body of general principles which were divinely ordained and hence immutable and incontrovertible. These were given to Moses through a written Torah, the Pentateuchal text, and a companion oral Torah. . . . It prescribes the methods and procedures for subsequent interpretation by man for development of *Halakah*. Such interpretation of

> Halakhic law, and it is here that the human element enters, is indispensable since the fundamental laws as they were delivered to Moses could not cover the infinite array of specific instances which, in the kaleidoscopic circumstances of human life, might some day arise."[22]

Buber, of course, speaks of the "human element" differently, and he objects to this type of Jewish morality mainly because he doubts that even detailed moral legislation can adequately anticipate the uniqueness of every daily situation. He does recognize that there are various similarities in different situations. Hence, we could construct types of situations and the appropriate moral response for those types. Then we would need to determine the category of each new situation, refer to the massive complex of established maxims, and apply the appropriate one. Buber argues that such moral responses are always incomplete because "what is untypical in the particular situation remains unnoticed and unanswered."

> "To me that seems the same as if, having ascertained the sex of a new-born child, one were immediately to establish its type as well, and put all the children of one type into a common cradle on which not the individual name but the name of the type was inscribed. In spite of all similarities every living situation has, like the new-born child, a new face, that has never been before and will never come again. It demands of you a reaction which cannot be prepared beforehand. It demands nothing of what is past. It demands presence, responsibility; it demands you."[23]

Buber opposes the traditional style of Jewish morality but, of course, not morals. His ethical philosophy is not a type of antinomianism. Like the early Hasidim, he trys to bring

spontaneity and personal responsibility to Jewish piety without committing the fallacy of the Sabbatians who made every man a law unto himself. Buber says, "No responsible person remains a stranger to norms."[24] His Biblical theology affirms the moral values of the Decalogue and the teachings of the prophets, but he makes a sharp distinction between the ethical teachings of Judaism and the commandments which God directs towards us in every unique situation. That is, he distinguishes between moral laws and the unpredictable command inherent in any particular situation. This fundamental feature of Buber's ethical philosophy can be amplified by considering his response to a question once put to him: "What should be done about the Ten Commandments in order to give them a sanction and validity they no longer possess?"[25] We learned earlier in the discussion that he accepts the fact that moral codes no longer have the authority over men they once exercised. Thus, it is neither insignificant nor surprising that Buber accepts the form of this question, but his radical reinterpretation of the nature of the Ten Commandments is most unusual and daring. His conception of what constitutes a commandment is understandable only against the background of the whole I-Thou philosophy. He argues that "the Ten Commandments are not part of an impersonal codex governing an association of men."[26] Rather, they are uttered by an "I" and addressed to a "Thou." He maintains, furthermore, that the moral response is a matter

of personal choice even though it is God who addresses us. "Whoever does not wish to respond to the Thou addressed to him," Buber observes, "can apparently go about his business unimpeded."[27] However, this freedom frightens man. Thus, the Ten Commandments are taken by man out of the realm of faith and religion and are made into "morals" and "laws." Then mankind translates the divine commandments "from the language which uses the personal imperative to the impersonal formulation of 'must,'" and these are enforced by public opinion and prosecution. Thus Buber concludes:

> "Nothing of the vast (legal) machinery (of society) has anything to do with the situation of the man who in the midst of a personal experience hears and feels himself addressed by the word 'thou.' "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain" (Exod. 20: 7), or "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor" (Exod. 20: 13). The vast machinery of society has nothing to do with the situation which prevails between the all-powerful Speaker who avoids exerting his power and him who is spoken to; and it has nothing to do with the daring, catastrophic, redeeming situation of faith."[28]

Therefore, Buber claims that the genuine commands of God occur only in man's immediate, dialogical relationship with eternal Thou. The real "Ten Commandments" are God's addresses to us in the concrete, unique situations which make up our everyday life. These commands are not moral rules but personal experiences between man and the eternal Speaker. But, we might ask, what about the moral maxims that we call the Ten Commandments? How does the written Decalogue become a living, personal command-

ment? Buber explains that whenever we accept for ourselves a moral norm, it becomes a latent part of our character until it enters our consciousness as the clue to God's specific demand in our contemporary situation.[29] Thus, if we are imbued with the moral wisdom of the Bible and if we listen for the familiar voice of God, our inner self will spontaneously apprehend and respond to the divine command of the moment. Buber's idea of situational commands supposes that man may avail himself of original revelation in everyday life rather than, as Jewish Orthodoxy teaches, apply the revelation given in the Jewish Law. Buber believes that the revelation which is always present for everyone is greater than the "dead letter" of the Law.

According to Buber's conception of Jewish morality, therefore, as we pass through each day doing our work and meeting people, we need not ask, what does the Jewish Law require of me in this situation? In fact, when we merely apply a legal maxim, something of the unique demand of the situation is overlooked. Above all, Jewish morality centres not in the Pentateuchal text and the subsequent interpretations, known as the Halakhic law, but in the divine Presence and the divine demand which we encounter in the everyday, concrete situation. Hence, we must simply ask, what does this situation in its uniqueness demand of my being, which is to ask also about God's personal address to me. Then we can only trust that our answer

fulfils the commands of God in that moment. But so much depends on one's personal apprehension and one's own sense of responsibility, we might ask, what prevents this position from leading to moral anarchy? Buber seems to think that at this point a great deal depends on education and example. He says:

> "This is where the educator can begin and should begin. . . . He can awaken in young people the courage to shoulder life again. He can bring before his pupils the image of great character who denies no answer to life and the world, but accepts responsibility for everything essential that he meets. . . . He can teach them in this way to recognize that discipline and order too are starting-points on the way towards self-responsibility."[30]

"Self-responsibility" is clearly the key word in Buber's philosophy of ethics. He makes a radical affirmation of individual responsibility and the autonomy of the human will in fulfilling that responsibility. Nevertheless, moral responses are not arbitrary, in his view, because the moral obligation, which is inherent in each situation, transcends our will as well as depends on our will. Our moral independence thus always means the responsibility of freedom and never freedom from responsibility. Thus, Buber argues that morality fundamentally consists of man's constant responsibility before God in the world, and that responsibility cannot be prescribed beforehand by even innumerable mitzvot.

Jacob Agus has made a comparative study of four major, modern philosophers of Judaism, Hermann Cohen, Franz Rosenzweig, Mordecai Kaplan, and Martin Buber. His final conclusion is that

> "though they represent widely differing philosophical

> movements, these thinkers agree that, at bottom, religion and ethics are one and that the voice of conscience is somehow also the voice of God. In this belief, modern Jewish philosophers continue to cultivate the original insight of their ancestral faith."[31]

Agus' study makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of Buber's philosophy and his place in modern Jewish thought. However, we should question his claim that "this core of belief (stated in the above quotation) is the main theme and the real starting-point of all these thinkers, forming the one cornerstone of their respective system of thought."[32] Agus' thesis needs to be qualified in order to be true of Buber's writings. The essential core of his faith includes also the conviction that everyone may enter an immediate relationship with God which results in the unity of religion and all life. This style of religious living hallows all human existence and prevents the separation of religious experience from everyday life in the world. Now, the unity of religion and ethics forms an integral and important part of this religious ideal, which is the real "one cornerstone" of Buber's thought. It is the unity of religion and ethics that gives us the answer to the significant questions, what is the content of our immediate relation to God and how do we hallow our everyday life in the world? Agus correctly maintains that the I-Thou relationship is basically an ethical experience.[33] God is everywhere present in the form of a moral imperative, and by responding to His situational command we

sanctify another part of our everyday life. It is this conception of ethical experience that links together Buber's panentheistic doctrine of God and his Hasidist piety, which attempts to "hallow the everyday."

There is another point in Agus' conclusion that needs to be qualified. It is not Buber's intention to somehow equate the voice of man's conscience with the voice of God. Rather, he wishes to affirm a paradox which denies neither the objective nor the subjective elements of ethical experience. On one hand, he insists that each situation has the separate, divine reality of God's revealed will, but, on the other hand, God's will is grasped by human insight and actualized by personal decision. The voice of God and the voice of man's conscience are thus interdependent but not equal. Perhaps, the importance of this paradox can be further clarified by contrasting the thought of Buber and Mordecai Kaplan, founder of the Reconstructionist movement of Judaism in America. Kaplan believes that there is no place for the supernatural world in our modern thinking, so he asks, where in the natural order, as we know it, can God be found? Isra Eisenstein explains that, for Kaplan, God is to be found in the moral law, which is as integral a part of the cosmos as any physical law. And the Reconstructionist movement of American Jewry has generally maintained that God is to be identified with that Force in the universe which appears in man in the form of

moral responsibility and moral courage.[34] Now, Buber also rejects the supernatural world as the place of God, and he finds God in the moral law, in the sense that God is everywhere present and continually confronting us with moral responsibility. However, the eternal Thou is always the Other over against us in each situation as well as the present One. We have immediate relationship with Him, and He commands us directly, yet there is always a "distance" between the "I" and the eternal "Thou." The eternal One who commands "Thou shalt...." is the absolute Person, in Buber's view of ethics and religion. Kaplan does not believe in a God who addresses man but One who is that Moral Address in the universe.[35]

Buber's conception of "direction," which was discussed in A Study of Hasidism, is also an important idea in his ethical philosophy. He describes moral "good" as "direction," that "total orientation of the soul by which it stands up to personal responsibility before God."[36] "Evil," as a moral condition of man, is the shirking of direction: it is "the aimless whirl of human potentialities without which nothing can be achieved and by which, if they take no direction but remain trapped in themselves, everything goes awry."[37] Buber does not speak of "direction" and the lack of it as opposite and mutually exclusive conditions. He believes that man is not either "good" or "evil" but is both together.[38] In other words, out of his disorderly and directionless

state comes order, direction, and morality but this happens only when man "hears" God's command in each situation and chooses to obey. It is this decision and this obedience which constitutes our self-responsibility before God. From Buber's point of view, God will not force us to become morally "good," nor will He punish us if we reject His address to us.[39] Our punishment will be self-inflicted; it will be the agony of living without "direction."

Buber's ethical theory has the virtue of including both sides of ethical experience. He acknowledges the awareness of a transcendental validity for moral imperatives as well as the immanental fact of man's participation in the ultimate structures of morality. However, it is possible that Buber treats one important aspect of life too lightly. In Buber's early philosophy of Judaism "good" is identified with decision of the whole being, and "evil" with the directionlessness that results from the failure to decide. Furthermore, this point of view has been adapted to his mature ethical philosophy.[40] This part of his ethics has the merit of elevating, even celebrating, the perception and volition of each individual in attaining moral goodness. Nevertheless, one might question whether such confidence overlooks a crucial problem, namely the experience of grave doubts about the right course of action. It is often difficult to "hear" the voice of God, and it is equally hard to differentiate between satanic "voices" and the genuine

command of God, especially when one seems to be led in unconventional directions. In moments of such doubt and confusion the simple moral maxims seem to offer more security and sanctity than the ambiguous, clouded commandments which come directly from the situation. We should not forget that without a moral code as a frame of reference many persons may not "hear" God's voice amid the clamour of the world. The following discussion should be looked upon not as a refutation but as a reformulation of Buber's point of view. An attempt will be made to clarify and extend his general approach because we cannot be certain whether Buber himself would grant that simple moral prescriptions might guide men in a steady course when God's address becomes enigmatic murmurs. He speaks about living with "holy insecurity" rather than accepting the easy security of a Halakhic regimen.[41] But we cannot be certain of the extent to which he would avoid moral codes and ethical systems as a basis of holiness. We have reason to suspect that he might be reluctant in many cases, hence an approach will be suggested here by which the I-Thou theology and revered traditions of moral legislation might be coordinated. We do not want to be put in the position of deciding between a free morality and moral laws. To be sure, Buber wisely warns us against shirking our responsibility to the uniqueness of each situation by merely applying an appropriate moral maxim. It is right for us to struggle insecurely with the particular command of God in

our immediate world, but do we need to forsake the use of moral rules in order to share in a free, creative morality? I think not.

We now return to the suggestion that moral laws and principles could be understood as Geistige Wesenheiten, that is, spiritual forms of the third sphere in which I-Thou experiences occur. It seemed admissible to include creeds, confessions, liturgies, and sacred rites in this category because they frequently involve many forms of art in the process of their creation and expression. But moral legislation has no immediate connection with the arts, except in the few cases where moral maxims take on a lyric, poetic tone. This is not a formidable problem, however, because "spirit in phenomenal form" refers to the arts, to be sure, but not to them alone. In I and Thou Buber says:

> "Spirit in its human manifestation is a response of man to his Thou. Man speaks with many tongues, tongues of language, of art, of action; but the spirit is one, the response of the Thou which appears and addresses him out of the mystery. . . . Spirit is not in the I, but between I and Thou."[42]

We have previously observed that for Buber genuine moral action is a response to our Thou, human or otherwise, thus morality exists between I and Thou, and it would be part of the reality he calls spirit. Now, should certain successive, common, and satisfying moral responses to our Thou be perceived and expressed as an ethical system, then it seems that these standards could be rightfully called "spirit in phenomenal form." Perhaps Buber avoids this conclusion because he fears that systematic ethics

and legal morality will encourage a static and artifical response to the "Thou which appears and addresses" us "out of the mystery." This danger is real, indeed, but that is no reason for discounting them. Freedom and order can be complementary sides of our moral response to the earthly Thou.

At this point it should be made clear that we are concerned here not with a defence of the Jewish Law but with the place of such Hebraic Christian maxims as "Love your neighbour,""Love your enemies," "You must not commit adultery, steal, bear false witness," "Be reconciled with one another," etc. These generalizations may be broken down into rules of conduct that prescribe a quite definite course of response in our everyday life. It is probable that such codes of conduct will vary from person to person, group to group, and culture to culture. Not all these codes will be admirable and enduring. In fact, some will be misguided and even detrimental ones. Thus it is not being suggested here that detailed social rules and private codes always have the inherent quality of <u>Geistige Wesenheiten</u>. Most likely, only the most prominent moral sayings of the great religions and classical literature deserve the status of being called "the spirit in phenomenal form." Hence, in the case of inferior traditions of ethical teaching, Buber's doubts about moral laws and prescriptions might be often justified, but we extends his point to an unnecessary extreme if we discount the legal and formal morality of the great religions.

Once we have integrated moral legislation into the basic I-Thou scheme, it is possible to draw a theological implication, namely that the eternal Thou might address us in noble ethical instruction as vividly and immediately as in the concrete situation. It could be argued that the great moral legislation of world religions has the capacity to act as the vehicle of the divine Presence rather than, as Buber supposes, the final negation of the living Word and the complete self-contradiction of man before God. This suggestion means to overcome Buber's dichotomy of revelation and legislation without placing the latter before the former. In other words, the situation wants to be viewed in terms of "both-and" as opposed to "either-or." There are not two separate voices, one from our daily life and one from the moral laws of religion, but rather one Voice that instructs us through both centres of moral imperative. Rather than set one over against the other, we should consider both types of divine command because they complement each other. If we accept noble ethical principles as the human utterance of the divine Will, then it might be argued that our I-Thou relation with God could be shaped and sustained by them. That is, we could say that we are prepared through moral laws and precepts for meeting the eternal Thou in our everyday life. The prescribed and permanent expectations of morality give the security of knowing how to begin our moral response but leave us with the challenge of

discovering in the moment the way to fulfil the uniqueness of each situation. Hence, in this alternative position we do not deny that self-responsibility is the key to a mature morality. Yet it seems more adequate to say that we are equally responsible to the outstanding moral principles as well as the situational commands of each unique situation. And this in no way implies the acceptance of that Jewish legalism that the early Christians and the eighteenth-century Hasidim so vigorously opposed.

In concluding our discussion of the Law and Jewish morality, it might be interesting to consider Buber's view of the place of the Law in the return of the Jewish people to Zion. There is nothing in Buber's writings that would encourage a modern Jew to dedicate himself to the Halakhic way of life. In fact, Buber views the later Halakah as only a temporary form of Judaism. The religious observances and laws developed in exile have the character, in Buber's opinion, of conserving what was realized in the Jewish state of the exile. Following Moses Hess, he holds that the spirit of the Jewish people will have the power to create new laws in accordance with the needs of the times, once it is able to develop freely again on the soil of Palestine. Over the years Buber has not changed this viewpoint for these ideas can be found in one of his last books, Israel and Palestine, as well as in his early Reden über das Judentum.[43] Buber's view of the destiny and place of the Jewish Law in the resettlement

of Palestine differs substantually from the Orthodox position, which has been formulated most liberally by Abraham Isaac Kuk, former Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem. Jacob Agus reports:

> "The nationalistic motive constitutes for Kuk the rationale for his Orthodox ritual observances. He believes that the Torah as formulated in the Talmud, the Codes, and the Kabbalah were the genuine national culture of Israel, and that a Jewish nationalist was in duty bound to observe its precepts."[44]

Rabbi Kuk writes: "We observe lovingly the customs of Israel that have no basis in Divine Revelation because of our reverence and affection for our nation."[45] In order to disclose their significance to modern Jews, Kuk reinterprets many Jewish ceremonies and customs as symbols of Jewish nationalism. In contrast, Buber encourages and anticipates not an academic reinterpretation of ancient laws and rites but the emergence of a new dispensation of Jewish life and faith. Furthermore, he certainly does not believe that being a Zionist means that one must observe the Jewish Law in either a traditional mode or reinterpreted form. From Buber's point of view, the Jews' determination to return to their homeland involves a quite different spiritual challenge. The "new Zion" offers the opportunity to renew the pre-exilic vigor of the Jewish religion and to create a new form of Jewish existence. As opposed to living under the Law, Buber encourages the Jew to live before an open future. He believes it is more important to heed God who speaks in the present hour than the Jewish Law which echoes from the past.

Summary and Conclusion:

In order to appreciate properly Buber's interpretation of Judaism, especially his controversial attitude towards the Jewish Law, we must see him first as a Jewish intellectual who has been alienated from his ancestral faith. In describing the spirit of those who gathered at the Freies Jüdisches Lehrhaus, Franz Rosenzweig said:

> "There is no one today who is not alienated, or who does not contain within himself some small fraction of alienation. All of us to whom Judaism, to whom being a Jew, has again become the pivot of our lives (and I know that in saying this here I am not speaking for myself alone) we all know that in being Jews we must not give up anything, not renounce anything, but lead everything back to Judaism. From the periphery back to the centre; from the outside, in."[46]

Buber was probably at the Lehrhaus when Rosenzweig delivered the speech from which this excerpt was taken, and Buber was certainly one of those on whose behalf he spoke. Buber affirmed Judaism as an outsider, that is, as a Jew trying to find a way back to the ancient faith of his people. And in the last chapter of the dissertation we will point up that he retained rather than renounced his socialist and humanistic frame of mind. Primarily, that which he discovered for himself in Judaism was the Hasidist faith. He has always maintained that classical Hasidism represented all the best qualities of Judaism. It is the key to understanding the heart of the Jewish religion. In his early books he even claimed that genuine Judaism could be found only in the Hasidist community

which gathered around the Baal-Shem-Tov. But in his later writings it is admitted that those essential characteristics of true Judaism can be found also in the faith and saintly lives of Jews in other religious traditions.[47]

Now, what is the essence of Judaism that is epitomized by the faith of the early Hasidim? It is a dialogue between man and God. This dialogue with God is essentially an ethical experience, and this religio-ethical relation to God is mediated by the immediate, concrete situations of everyday life. Our daily life is hallowed by our participation in this all-embracing relation. Thus, the Judaism of the Bible and the Hasidim makes no false division between religion and the secular life nor between religion and ethics. For the adherents of Judaism all "life in the world" becomes "life in God." In the final analysis, this acceptance of God's claim to all aspects of life is, according to Buber, the central feature of the Jewish religion. He writes, "The theism of Israel is characterized finally in this, that the faith-relation according to its nature wishes to be valid for, and to bear upon, all of life."[48]

It would be indeed difficult to determine whether Buber's neo-Hasidist orientation influenced his Biblical theology or _vice versa_. He held the classical literature of the early Israelites and the early Hasidist sayings in equally high esteem. He devoted a great portion of his days to the study and interpretation of

these sacred writings. In his spiritual life the words of the Bible and the words of the early Hasidim must have flowed together into one powerful witness to genuine Jewish religion. Moreover, Buber was certainly not a passive partner in this dialogue with the great Jewish saints of the past. He embodied their faith within himself and recreated that faith in terms of our modern situation. Thus, when he discloses the nature of Biblical religion and the faith of the Hasidim, Buber also confesses his own religious outlook. Although his critics read the Bible and interpret the Hasidist texts from different religious perspectives, it would seem that even they could appreciate the consistency with which Buber illuminates his own religious ideal through historical study and the discussion of contemporary spiritual problems. As a student moves from one area of Buber's thought to another, he is allowed to view this central religious ideal from various perspectives. We have now looked at it from three directions: Hasidism, Biblical Judaism, and the I-Thou philosophy. In these three areas of thought Buber is pressing the reader to share one essential conviction. God is present in your immediate world, and He demands a personal relationship with you. The essence of your religious life consists of your response to that invitation. If you constantly "turn to God" and "hallow the everyday," then your "life in the world" becomes "life in God." Buber's Zionist theories offer us still another area in which this religious ideal is developed and applied.

We come to review his social philosophy and Zionist position lastly because these areas of thought cannot be understood properly apart from his study of Hasidism, his total I-Thou philosophy, and his interpretation of Biblical Judaism. Furthermore, all these major divisions of his thought take on a deeper meaning when seen in relation to "the dream of Zion."

PART FOUR: THE DREAM OF ZION

CHAPTER XIII

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ZIONIST IDEOLOGY

The growth of nationalism was a Europe-wide phenonemon in the ninetheenth century, and it affected the Jews no less profoundly than other European peoples. But Jewish nationalism has its own particularities, the most important of which was the intense longing for Zion. The Jews were a people with no land at their disposal. The Holy Land had fallen into the possession of Gentiles so long ago that the return to that land seemed no more than a dream. Nevertheless, the daily prayers, ancient liturgies and customs, the folk tales and the holy Book kept that hope alive through the centuries, and it became more urgent with the passing of time. Some Jews of western Europe, however, no longer looked to Zion as their home because they had been successfully assimilated into the cultural and civil life of other nationalities. But the course of modern history was against these western Jews. The forces of nationalism fostered pride in one's own kind and distrust of the outsider. In much of Europe this tendency gradually turned into national egoism and anti-Semitism. Jews who had been faithful to their adopted nation were finding themselves rejected by it. As prejudice against Jews increased, they began to dream again

about a country of their own where the Jews would not be left betrayed and homeless. Decades before the Jews of western Europe fell victim to German nationalism at the zenith of fanaticism, their eastern neighbours had suffered a succession of pogroms. Often these Jews in the ghettos of eastern Europe found the strength to endure in their messianic hope that some day God would allow them to return to Zion. Thus, when Jewish nationalism emerged in Europe, it inevitably assumed the form of Zionism, a passion as well as a program to resettle the Jewish homeland.

The conscious cultivation of Jewish nationalism in the nineteenth century can be traced back to the historical and philosophical investigations of Nahman Krochmal, Solomon Raporport, Samuel David Luzzutto, Perez Smolenskin, and Moses Hess.[1] Because Buber thinks that everything essential to Zionist ideology can be found already in Hess' writings, he acknowledges him as the founder of the modern Zionist system of thought. Moses Hess (1812-1875) was a contemporary of Marx and Engels, and he himself was devoted to the socialist movement. Although Hess came from an Orthodox family, he did not take his Jewish nationality and religious heritage very seriously until late in life. In 1862 at the age of fifty he published the small volume entitled Rome and Jerusalem, which has become one of the classics of Zionist literature. Hess felt it necessary to begin his book by confessing a twenty-year

long alienation from Judaism that had now ended by his decision to devote himself to the national rebirth of his people and the rebuilding of their land. He thought of the renewal of the Jewish people and the return to their land as inseparable developments.[2] He wrote:

> "Since we have lost the land we can no longer serve God as a nation through institutions which cannot be continued and developed in our present exile, since they presuppose a society founded in the land of our ancestors. Yes, it is the land that we lack, in order to practise our religion."[3]

Buber thinks that "our religion" means "that religion which is inseparably bound up with politics--no isolated sphere of worship and theology, but the world of faith the meaning and purpose of which is to be transformed into the living local activity of a people."[4] Hess naturally thought of the new society in terms of socialistic principles. The people were to own the land in common, and the new social patterns were to be based on a truly communal life. Hess was particularly impressed by the writings of the Italian patriot Mazzini. If the Italians were entitled to their Risorgimento, Hess reasoned, why should the Jews not also have the right to their own national awakening and homeland?[5] According to Hess, the new Jewish Jerusalem will be a real Zion radiating its truth and righteousness across the world. The Jewish settlement in Palestine will found the Kingdom of God on earth by the creation of model social institutions. Buber emphasizes that Hess did not set out an ideal constitution for this model society.

Instead he expected the Jewish people to develop new laws and customs in accordance with the needs of the time once they returned to their own land. Buber concludes his assessment of Hess' contribution as follows:

> "In Rome and Jerusalem and the supplementary treatises Moses Hess comes forward as the first religious socialist in the history of Judaism. . . . (He) died before the Zionist movement had even started. But even today, seventy-five years after his death, the movement has not yet really caught up with him."[6]

Buber regrets that Hess' messianic vision was not accepted more widely and completely by the Zionist leaders who followed him. Consequently, Buber relentlessly seeks full recognition for the general socialist and messianic point of view that he shares with Moses Hess. As we discuss the Zionist ideas and the religious socialism of Martin Buber, it will become evident, in my judgment, that he is the most faithful disciple of Hess in the modern Zionist movement.

Three years after the publication of Rome and Jerusalem Hess wrote, as a supplement to that book, a treatise in French in which he anticipates Ginzberg's well-known conception of the Palestinian settlement as a "spiritual centre" for all Jews throughout the world. However, Asher Zvi Ginsberg (1856-1927), known in Zionist circles as Ahah-Ha'am, acknowledges Leo Pinsker (1821-1891) as the first exponent of that idea. Buber presumes that Ginzberg was not acquainted with the French treatise of 1865 in which Hess wrote:

> "We believe in a revival of the genius of our race, which only lacks a centre of activity around which a nucleus of men devoted to Israel's religious mission could gather, and from which there might then arise again the eternal principles which unite the human race with the universe and the universe with its Creator."[7]

Buber explains that there is, however, an important difference between Pinsker's concept of a "national spiritual centre" in Palestine, as developed by Ahad-Ha'am, and Hess' concept of a "centre of activity." The former is concerned with cultural creativity, the latter with social action; the former with the reconstruction of the "ruins of our spirit" and the restoration "to our people of the honour of its name and its rightful place in the temple of human civilization," the latter with the renewal of the great social ideals of Israel through the institutions of community life. Buber goes on to explain that Pinsker and Ahah-Ha'am intended that the "centre" should so influence the "periphery," i.e. the Jewish communities of the Diaspora, that "the national spirit will be renewed in all hearts" and "the feeling of national unity strengthened in them." It should "purify the mind from the baseness of the Galut and fill the life of the spirit with the genuine and natural spiritual content." But for Moses Hess the task of the "centre" is to call on all those who have remained true to Israel's basic and original task to rally round the great work of realizing the "eternal principles" in their own land and thereby prepare the way for the fulfilment of the messianic hope.[8] We will find that Buber incorporated both views in his

own Zionist thought. That is, he hoped that the Palestinian settlement would become both a "centre of activity" in the Hessian sense and a "national spiritual centre" as envisaged by the agnostic rabbi, Ahad-Ha'am.

The second classic of Zionist literature, Theodore Herzl's The Jewish State, appeared fourteen years after Hess' Rome and Jerusalem. Buber maintains that from the point of view of the history of ideas, however, The Jewish State belonged to an earlier stage. Herzl's book was far superior as regards the consistency and intellectual organization of a political and legal plan for an independent Jewish settlement. He was a man of practical vision and diplomacy who, for the first time, made the "dream of Zion" seem like a feasible historical reality. But Herzl seriously reduced the Zionist idea which had inspired Moses Hess. It was the ancient messianic vision of Israel's destiny that had stirred Hess. He knew that the historical settlement had been charged with a suprahistorical task, the realization of the Kingdom of God. Herzl, on the other hand, was only conscious of the historical dimension of the Jewish mission, and he was mainly motivated by the necessity of emancipation from anti-Semitism. Above all, Herzl wanted a Jewish government in a territory somewhere that would provide asylum for the persecuted Jews of the world. The deeply rooted fact of Jewish nationalism, of Jewish cultural traditions, of the enduring Jewish affinity for Zion, apparently

had little part in his vision of the Jewish State. Herzlian Zionism did not penetrate, in Buber's words, "to the point where heaven and earth meet." Therefore, "the modern Zionist movement began," in Buber's judgment, "with a foreshortening of the idea."[9]

After publishing his book and thus making his plan public, Herzl devoted his life and a considerable fortune to implementing it. At the outset he thought that the future of his hopes depended on the wealth and diplomacy of the Jewish arist ocracy of Europe. Being an aristocrat and intellectual of high standing, Herzl was able to discuss his plan with Baron Maurice de Hirsch and Edmond de Rothschild, but both men turned down his request for funds and moral support. Hence, Herzl decided to organize the enthusiasm of the poor masses who suffered in the ghettos. He was determined first to summon a World Zionist Congress in order to provide his movement with this mass base. Sachar rightly says that it was a daring, certainly a presumptuous move for one man to make. Yet Herzl was not without qualifications for the role of leadership that he was undertaking. He possessed a commanding presence and personality, the legal background of a doctorate of jurisprudence, and years of journalistic experience in connection with western parliments. The First Zionist Congress convened on the 29th of August, 1897, in Basel. Some 204 delegates had arrived from all corners of the world.[10] Martin Buber, then a young nonobservant, socialist student at the University of Vienna, was

there, and he was overwhelmed by the dramatic atmosphere of the Congress. Arthur Hertzberg informs us that Buber consequently became a Zionist in 1898, and in that year he founded both the Zionist organization of Leipzig and of the Jewish students' club at the university.[11] Hans Kohn tells us that already in 1899 at the Third Zionist Congress Buber said: "Zionism is not a political cause but a *Weltanschauung*. The cultivation of this *Weltanschauung* is the duty of our faction."[12] In 1901 Buber worked for some months with Herzl in Vienna as editor of *Die Welt*, the official organ of Zionism. By the end of the year there was, however, a break between him and Herzl, for Buber felt he should no longer support in any way a Zionist idea that included only limited political aims.[13] Buber associated himself afterwards solely with the Zionist faction that sought a gradual resettlement of Palestine by Jews who would be dedicated to a general resurgence of the spiritual and cultural traditions of the Jewish people as well as a rejuvenation of the sacred soil. In 1902 Buber and other advocates of this cultural and practical Zionism, as it has been variously called, founded a publishing house, the *Jüdischer Verlag*, for the advancement of a cultural renascence among the Jewish people. Many years later Buber recalls:

> "When I entered the Zionist movement more than sixty years ago, I very soon saw myself compelled to take sides in the conflict between the 'political' and the 'practical' tendencies within the movement. I decided without hesitation for the latter, and have remained faithful to it, manifold as have been its forms in

> the course of time. One can find in my writings from 1901 on, and in much stronger forms after 1917, programmatic and concrete expressions of this trend."[14]

Theordore Herzl's career as the founder of the modern Zionist movement ended rather sadly. The First Zionist Congress had proclaimed the main purpose of the movement: "Zionism seeks to secure for the Jewish people a publicly recognized, legally secured home in Palestine." As the president of the Congress, Herzl had given his full time to the essential organizational and diplomatic work necessary to achieve that goal. He tirelessly negotiated with the Sulton of Turkey, Kaiser Wilhelm, the King of Italy, Pope Pius X, and the British Government in his attempt to secure entry into the Palestinian area. For seven years he ardently worked to fulfil that resolution, but all his noble attempts ended in failure. As a last desperate resort, in 1903 Herzl accepted the British Government's generous offer of a large tract of land in Uganda, East Africa, for a Jewish self-governing settlement. The proposal was presented to the Zionist Congress of 1904 as a temporary substitute for Zion. But the Zionists of eastern Europe, lead by the young Chaim Weizmann, among others, fought the plan as an intolerable compromise.[15] Herzl was flabbergasted when the East European delegates walked out of the auditorium _en masse_. Buber himself was possibly among those disillusioned delegates. If he was not present at that Congress, we can be sure that he was in full sympathy with the protest. The British

Government graciously withdrew the offer a year later, but a deeper problem remained; Herzl's way of thinking could no longer unite all viewpoints of the expanding movement. Herzl was now very ill and emotionally exhausted, and he died the same year at the age of forty-five without materializing his "dream of Zion." Indeed, many sincere Zionist, even friends and former associates, were questioning his diplomatic methods and political aims although the criticism did not show lack of respect or gratitude. No Jew of Europe was unaware that Herzl had sacrificed his fortune and health for them. Moreover, he left behind very significant, tangible accomplishments. The fundamental organization and financial security of the movement had been established through his efforts. Undoubtly Theodore Herzl had initiated a new epoch in Jewish history.

Under the leadership of men like Martin Buber, Chaim Weizmann, and Ahad-Ha'am the strength of practical Zionism increased in number and determination. These Zionist took upon themselves the responsibility of restoring the whole Zionist idea which Herzl had never been able to grasp fully. Herzl had made a beginning but a more adequate Zionist program awaited the labours of Jews who believed that Zion must become more than another secular State. The biographical sketches of Buber's life usually suggest that in 1904 he retired from his Zionist responsibilities in order to study the literature of Hasidism. But it would be more accurate,

in my opinion, to say that he entered a new phase of his development as a practical and cultural Zionist. The main impetus of practical Zionism had come from gifted writers and leaders of eastern Europe, and Buber himself was now looking to the East for the more spiritual direction that he hoped the Zionist movement would take. The mission of Zionism, according to the Ukranian Jew, Ahad Ha'am, was to solve the problem not merely of the Jew but of Judaism as well, and Buber found that the Hasidist tradition was his guide to the renewal of Judaism. Ahad Ha'am insisted that there was too much concern for the physical safety of the Jews. Jewish nationalism ought to be concerned chiefly with reviving the cultural loyalities and spiritual productivity of the Jewish people, he believed.[16] We misunderstand Buber's dedication to reviving Hasidist literature and to reinterpreting Biblical Judaism if this work is not seen as a response to such a Zionist conviction. In the autobiographical notes called "My Way to Hasidism," written in 1918, Buber explains that Zionism had drawn him back to Judaism but before he had grasped what he was professing. It was through his discovery and study of Hasidism that he first came to understand the real meaning of the culture and religion of the Jewish people. Thus he refers to his early activities in the Zionist movement as a "first step" and his intense study of Hasidist literature as the "second step" back to Judaism.[17]

When Buber emerged from his initial study of the spiritual heritage of the Jewish people, he assumed the editorship of the Zionist periodical, Der Jude, which was the voice of those who might be called practical Zionists. Der Jude had been founded by Weizmann and Buber in 1904, and Buber served as editor from 1916 to 1923. Buber's return to the front of Zionist activity coincided with the gradual victory of practical Zionism. On the eve of the First World War the German-Jewish "politicals" were at last compelled to relinquish control of the World Zionist Organization to the much more numerous and passionate Zionism that had come out of eastern Europe. The high quality and popularity of Der Jude gave invaluable support and direction to that Zionism which was devoted to more than a tentative solution to Jewish political insecurity.[18]

The period of 1904 to 1916 were years during which important diplomatic preparations were being made in England by Chaim Weizmann. It was in 1904 that Weizmann left the Continent to take up a readership in chemistry at the University of Manchester. He had been educated in the finest universities of Switzerland and Germany, and he soon gained the reputation of being one of the most brilliant chemists in Britian. When the war began Weizmann was called to London to apply his fine ability in chemistry on behalf of the war effort. He found that this was an opportunity to win friends for the Zionist cause in London Society as well as ingratiate himself

with the British Government. By 1917 Weizmann decided that the time had come to press the British Government for a statement of pro-Zionist sympathy. Through a series of complex negotations and international conferences Washington and Whitehall jointly committed themselves to the plan of a Jewish National Home in Palestine. The final announcement came in the form of a letter from Foreign Secretary Balfour to Lord Rothschild, President of the British Zionist Federation. Only a month later the British legions liberated Palestine and its Jewish population from the Turks. At last after many centuries a dream was coming true for the Jewish people.[19]

Buber's addresses and articles indicate that by the time he assumed his duties as editor of Der Jude his own Zionist views were reaching a rather stable form. In retrospect he writes:

> "At the beginning of the century, when a circle of young people to which I belonged began to direct the attention of Jews in German-speaking countries to a rebirth of the Jewish people and the Jew as an individual, we defined the goal of our efforts as a Jewish renascence."[20]

He explains that in 1913 he defined "the spirit required to direct a program of this kind as Hebrew humanism."[21] But what does he mean by "Hebrew humanism"? Buber observes:

> "If we investigate the origin of the concept of humanitas on which humanism is based, we discover that it is primarily the belief in man as such, the belief that man is not merely a zoological species, but a unique creature: but this is true only if he

> really is human, *i.e.* if he translates into the reality of his life the one characteristic element which cannot be found anywhere else in the universe."[22]

He goes on to explain that the European humanism of the Renaissance was an attempt to discover and live out the pattern of the ideal man in the writings of classical antiquity. In like manner, he defines Hebrew *humanitas* as the realization of that ideal man who is disclosed in the great document of Jewish antiquity, the Hebrew Bible. Hence, Buber refers to "Hebrew humanism" also as "Biblical humanism" and "Hebrew Biblical humanism." Hebrew humanism thus means a return to the Biblical origins of the Jewish people. Buber writes:

> "In his essay on the origin of humanism, Konrad Burdach elucidates his subject by quoting from Dante's *Convivio*: 'The greatest desire Nature has implanted in every thing from its beginning is the desire to return to its origin.'"[23]

Buber argues that a people's "return to its origin" must be not merely an imitation of the past but a renascence of the classical age in terms of the contemporary situation. Now, returning to the original Biblical man, according to Buber, requires the reunion of the "soil of Israel" and the "spirit of Israel."[24]

The relation of Israel and Palestine is the sole subject of one of Buber's last books. He begins the book with an exegesis of the main Biblical passages which deal with Israel's right to take and possess the land of Palestine.[25] That soil belongs to Israel, Buber argues, because of a divine, pre-historical election.

The Scriptures teach that God created, destined, and prepared this very land for the Jewish people who were to arise in history as the beginning of His Kingdom. Hence, both Israel and Palestine were elected and brought together by God for a unique rôle in the world. The bond between this land and this people is at the bottom of the history of Jewish faith. The promise came through Abraham, preparations were made by way of Moses' leadership, and the occupation of the Israelites before the Exile was their first opportunity to fulfil the divine purpose of Israel and Palestine. To be sure, the people and their earthly king failed to establish the divine kingship of God over their whole life, but the story does not end here. The prophets of the Exile evolved the Messianic vision in which Zion becomes the centre of the redeemed world and a redeemed humanity. Buber concludes:

> "The people of Israel is called upon to be the herald and pioneer of the redeemed world, the land of Israel to be its centre and the throne of its King. In this doctrine the Biblical view of the unique significance of the connection between this people and this land reaches its climax."[26]

Buber then gives the rest of the book to showing that this Biblical doctrine of the great Return is reaffirmed and celebrated throughout the whole post-Biblical literary tradition of the Jewish people.[27] He thus believes that the Biblical bond of Israel and Palestine must be regained in order that the chosen people of God and the chosen land of God might become the seat of the Kingdom of God in the world. Buber boldly claims that the Jewish people differ

from all other nations in that a supranational task was imposed by God on its national life from the very beginning of its history. He believes that if Israel would return to its land and found a just society and just foreign relations, as God had commissioned, then "international peace and the beginnings of true humanity would issue forth from the mountain of Zion."[28] Buber points out that "Hasidism was the one great attempt in the history of the Diaspora" to create a just community of faith, but the movement failed partly because "its connections with Palestine were only sporadic and not influenced by the desire for national liberation."[29] In essence Buber teaches that the classical Biblical man builds Zion only on Mount Zion, and the destiny of mankind rests upon him.

We know that, as a young intellecual at university, Buber had read and admired the thought of Nietzsche.[30] Like the eastern Zionist intellectual, Michah Joseph Berdichevski, Buber appears to be indebted to Nietzsche's vision of a new society which will be created by men of superior capacity. Buber dreams with Nietzsche of a new humanity, a superior age of mankind. As Zionists, both Berdichevski and Buber assert that Israel and Palestine are destined by nature and divine decree to achieve greatness and unparalleled heights of human stature. It is surprising to notice how close Buber comes in his Zionist views to a Nietzschian position in which the Jew is proclaimed as the "superman" and the Jewish people as the "super-race." Was he not aware that unconditional faith in

the supernational, suprahistorical destiny of a land and a people has led to gross inhumanity and bloody revolutions in modern history? After witnessing what racial pride could do in Nazi Germany, it seems strange that a Jew would speak so arrogantly about the superior place of his people in the world. Had Buber not learned that a mission with absolute sanction and infinite glory can often, in the minds of those caught up in a movement, justify any "means" of achieving that "end"? Yes, although he seems oblivious of his own national egoism, Buber had always known of its danger. In an article of 1929 concerning the socialist, Gustav Landauer (1868-1919), Buber recalls being involved in a heated argument about such a danger just before Landauer's tragic death. Buber and his close friend, Landauer, were in the Diet building in Munich with several revolutionary leaders. Landauer had proposed "terror" as a subject of discussion. The centre of discussion moved to a debate between Buber and a German officer. He says: "I declined to do what many apparently had expected of me—to talk of the moral problem; but I set forth what I thought about the relation between end and means."[31] The essence of Buber's views on this subject appear at various places throughout his writings. He thinks that if one chooses "means" that are contrary in nature with the "end" being sought, then the value of that "end" is negated no matter how worthy it may be. Buber remembers that on this particular occasion he documented his

view from historical and contemporary experience, then the officer sought to document his apology for "terror" by examples:

> "'Dzertshinsky,' he said, 'the head of the Cheka, could sign a hundred death sentences a day, but with an entirely clean soul.' 'That is, in fact, just the worst of all,' I answered. 'This clean soul you do not allow any splashes of blood to fall on! It is not a question of souls but of responsibility.' My opponent regarded me with unperturbed superiority. Landauer, who sat next to me, laid his hand on mine. His whole arm trembled."[32]

Although Buber had a ready answer for the revolutionary officer, can he argue as forcefully with the course of history? Is it not possible that his type of Jewish claims and pride contribute greatly to the history of misunderstanding and violence between Arabs and Jews? We must look at this point further in chapter fifteen, "The Way to Zion."

Now, in the polemics of Zionist ideology Buber places Hebrew humanism in opposition to secular Jewish nationalism.[33] In other words, Hebrew humanism is his answer to that political Zionism which views Israel as only another nationality. He completely rejects such Jewish nationalism for two reasons. Buber does not oppose national pride and ideology, of course, yet he explains, "National ideology, the spirit of nationalism, is fruitful just so long as it does not make the nation an end in itself."[34] Nationalism should be limited to the purpose of pointing to a problem in national life or to a national task that has not been fulfilled. But the moment national ideology makes the nation

an end in itself, it becomes a false force, it annuls any right to exist. When Jewish nationalism, and any other nationalism, makes the nation an absolute, it shuts its people off from the true, living God who meets man in history with the demand of righteousness. Israel would forfeit its very reason for being, in Buber's judgment, if it turned away from God and made a god of Jewish nationality.[35] Hence, Buber rejects the Jewish nationalism that would make the "nation an end in itself" because it destroys the Biblical dialogue between man and the God of Israel and because the supernational task of the Jewish people is consequently denied. When Jewish nationalism disowns the supernational task on which the nation is based and by which it is conditioned, it also dares to isolate Judaism and to disengage it from a vital connection with the whole national life. Buber says:

> "The men in the Bible are sinners like ourselves, but there is one sin they do not commit, our arch-sin; they do not dare confine God to a circumscribed space or division of life, to 'religion' . . . . He is not taken in by the hoax of modern national egoism. . . . It remained for our time to separate the Jewish people and the Jewish religious community which were fused from earliest beginnings, and to establish each as an independent unit, a nation like unto other nations and a religion like unto other religions. Thanks to the unparalleled work in Palestine, the nation is on the rise. The religion, however, is on a steep downward fall, for it is no longer a power which determines all of life; it has been confined to the special sphere of ritual and sermons. But a Jewish nation cannot exist without religion any more than a Jewish religious community without nationality. Our only salvation is to become

> Israel again, to become a whole, the unique whole of a people and a religious community: a renewed people, a renewed religion, and the renewed unity of both.[36]

Buber comes back, in the end, to the religious ideal which forms a central feature of every major area of his thought. His Hebrew humanism affirms the dialogical relation between man and God who is present in the entire national life of Israel and who demands that Israel hallow their life in order to initiate Zion. In Zion "life in Israel" is transformed into "life in God." Consequently, in Zion all formal "religion," i.e. religion as a separate activity and special sphere in the national life, is unnecessary; the supposedly deficient state of rituals and sermons gives way to a mystical piety that is expressed throughout the total national life. The "lovers of Zion" seek nothing less than a unity of Jewish religion and Jewish life, and a renascence of both, but that new beginning would probably mean, in Buber's mind, the end of organized, official Judaism.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY OF MARTIN BUBER

In the last chapter we considered Buber's participation in one of the distinctive features of modern history, the growth of nationalism. There is another social phenomenon of our times that equally influenced the course of Buber's thought: the rise of socialism. Buber became interested in the nature of man's social life because he was one of those European intellectuals who saw the need for social reform in our western culture. In order to change man's social patterns one must first determine what constitutes the basic reality of society. Is it the human spirit or social structures? Does social change begin with the individuals who make up an aggregate, or does it start with the outer forms that regulate social interaction? Karl Marx, the father of socialism, thought that social change centres in the struggle between class structures, and he also maintained that the working class must rise up and radically alter the whole social order before any significant social renewal could take place. As the forces of nationalism and socialism have joined together to cause great revolutions in our century, it is this Marxian philosophy that has prevailed over any other point of view.

Nevertheless, Buber chose to develop another line of socialist thought, and he hoped that Zion might become the place of its realization. Buber's early ideas on the subject were decisively influenced by the socialist theory of his friend, Gustav Landauer, the social voluntarism of Michael Kropotkin, and the analysis of Ferdinand Tönnies who published _Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft_ (1887). In 1919 Buber wrote that modern western culture is on the decline from _Gemeinschaft_ to _Gesellschaft_. _Gesellschaft_ consists of merely an association of individuals held together by agreement, common direction, and possibly coercion. But _Gemeinschaft_ is a free unity of individuals, a community formed and sustained by a bond of spontaneous relations between all members. He also claimed that Marxian socialism would destroy what remained of true community by absorbing it in the power and bureaucracy of the State.[1] Buber was completing _Ich und Du_ the same year that he published _Gemeinschaft_.[2] Hence, by 1920 he had formulated his basic answer to the question of social change and renewal. Without denying the importance of structural reform, he affirmed the human spirit as the maker of a new socialist world. The new social order will emerge by means of the recovery and assertion of the sphere of the spirit. The power of the spirit, according to Buber, is not within man but between men. Our western culture will be rejuvenated by individuals coming together in true community, which consists of voluntary, mutual relationships

within, and between, small societies. In other words, when men enter into genuine I-Thou relations, the trend of our times is reversed; Gesellschaft is transformed by Gemeinschaft. Buber expounds this view in a short but dramatic essay, "What is to be Done?" (1919):

> "Ancient rot and mould is between man and man. Forms born of meaning degenerate into convention, respect into mistrust, modesty in communicating into stingy taciturnity. Now and then men grope towards one another in anxious delirium--and miss one another, for the heap of rot is between them. Clear it away, you and you and you! Establish directness, formed out of meaning, respectful, modest directness between men! . . . Some say civilization must be preserved through 'subduing.' There is no civilization to preserve. And there is no longer subduing! But what may ascend out of the flood will be decided by whether you throw yourselves into it as seeds of true community. . . . Again the voices became silent. But now they do not begin again. Silently the world waits for the spirit."[3]

In the essay on Gemeinschaft that Buber wrote in 1919 he says in the closing paragraphs: "The men who long for Gemeinschaft long for God."[4] We recall from chapter eight that true community, according to Buber, always has a divine centre even though it might remain nameless and unannounced. Thus he totally rejects atheistic socialism in favour of religious socialism. Buber opens the important essay, "Three Theses of a Religious Socialism" (1928), with the words of Leonhard Ragaz: "Any socialism whose limits are narrower than God and man is too narrow for us."[5] Buber says: "Religious socialism can only mean that religion and socialism are essentially directed to each other, that each of them needs

the covenant with the other for the fulfilment of its own essence."[6] However, religion is even more dependent on socialism than _visa versa_. "Socialism without religion does not hear the divine address, it does not aim at response, still it happens that it responds; religion without socialism hears the call but does not respond."[7] In order to understand these pungent sayings correctly, we should recall that Buber defines genuine religion as a dialogical relation with God in the world. He thinks that the established religions and the socialist parties stand in opposition to each other because neither share in real _religio_ nor true _socialitas_. Hence, the future of both religion and socialism, in his judgment, poses the same question: will man enter into the truth of I and Thou relationships and thus true community? "Religious socialism means that man in the concretness of his personal life takes seriously the fundamentals of this life; the fact that God is, that the world is, and that he, this human person, stands before God and in the world."[8] Now, it is surely apparent that Buber's religious ideal forms the very heart of this line of socialist thought. Religious socialism, as conceived by Buber, affirms both the vertical and horizontal dimensions of the I-Thou philosophy. Transcendence meets us in the immanental sphere of social responsibility, and the socialist way of life fulfils the requirements of true religiousness. It seems that the true socialist, in his opinion, is the "classical Biblical man" to whom we must return in order

to establish the kingdom of God on earth in our age. From the viewpoint of religious socialism, then, the power of the spirit that changes and renews society is not human alone; it is both human and divine; to be more precise, it is the human and divine in dialogue.

Because Buber views the nature of society and religion with the same perspectives, it will not be surprising to find, as this chapter proceeds, that the possible weak point of his conception of religion is reflected in his social philosophy. By that I mean, in his valid defence of the freedom and spontaneity of community, we cannot be certain that he allows sufficiently for the positive contribution of social control and political structure. The spirit of man cannot be allowed to go its way too freely. That is, anarchy is not the answer to the social evils of our times. It is not being suggested, of course, that Buber extends his argument to that extreme. He does acknowledge that the spirit needs guidance, but he insists that such direction belongs to the duties of the sensitive teacher and not the political leader. This contrast might be too sharp, yet his point is certainly worthy of notice. He deplores the fact that in our century men have often cast the teacher aside because they believe that they can manage with the leader alone. As a result, Buber explains, the officials of modern States proclaim their independence of the free spirit or they subject it to ideology. Certainly the people that has no leader will lack vital direction, he says, but more

unfortunate is the people whose leader has no teacher. In 1942 Buber was referring back to one of his addresses included in the book, Kampf um Israel, when he said:

> "What has happened in the world during the last fifteen years has confirmed the truth of my words in a degree that at that time I could barely have had a presentiment of. Successful leading without teaching comes near to destroying all that makes human life seem worth living."[9]

Of course, Buber is not thinking of "teaching" that is nothing more than political propaganda, nor is he commending the type of teacher that forces himself on the learner and makes others over in his own image. Rather, he has in mind the educator who opens himself and the whole world of human wisdom to the learner in a dialogical relationship. In chapter seven we discussed Buber's concept of the new type of teacher who helps a person discover and actualize his own potentiality and place in the world rather than mold him into an established way of life and thought. Buber's concern about "successful leading without teaching" brings up another subject that has been briefly mentioned beforehand, namely the use of power. A successful leader whose spirit has not been made sensitive and judicious by human wisdom is dangerous because of the power at his disposal. He will destroy true community and turn his followers into a mere collectivity that he can easily control. Buber seems to be saying that power is good only if those who have it are good. The topic of power will be taken up again later in this chapter.

We now turn to a further review of Buber's conception of real *socialitas*. His view of the ideal society probably developed gradually over the years although its fundamental nature, as we have learned above, was clear in his mind quite early in his life. Buber's fullest discussion of the political and economic patterns of true community were published while he taught social philosophy at Hebrew University. These later writings make a further attack on Marxian thought as well as set forth a non-Marxian socialism. In *Paths in Utopia* (1949) Buber defends "utopian socialism," but what does he mean by that designation? He acknowledges that the polemics of Marx and Engles have resulted in the term "utopian" being used, both within Marxism and outside of it, for a socialism which appeals to reason, to justice, to the will of man to remedy the maladjustments of society, instead of his acquiring an active awareness of what is dialectically and inevitably evolving from the industrial revolution. Even though all voluntaristic socialism is rejected as "utopianism" by these necessitarians," as Buber calls them, he argues that they are not free of utopianism themselves. However, Buber says, "The utopian elements in it (Marxian socialism) are of another kind and stand in a different context."[10] By that he means, all socialists propose a vision of the future of society, and these take one of two basic forms of eschatology, the prophetic or the apocalyptic. This distinction was introduced

first in our review of Buber's comparative study of the prophetic faith of Israel and the Christian tradition in which he discerns apocalyptic tendencies from the very beginning. In the prophetic view of history every person is addressed in every moment in an unpredicable way with the task of redeeming that point in history, and everyone is endowed with the capacity to bring his immediate history to its fulfilment. But according to the apocalyptic view, the redemptive process in all its details, its very hour and course, has been fixed beforehand by hidden forces, and human beings are only secondary instruments of its accomplishment.[11] Buber observes that in the socialist secularization of eschatology the prophetic form appears in some systems of the so-called Utopians, and the apocalyptic one above all in Marxism. He says, "The point at which, in Marx, the utopian apocalypse breaks out . . . is the convulsion of all things _after_ the social revolution."[12] Marx and Engels believe that by their "scientific" study of history and society they had disclosed an inherent and inevitable process that was pointing to an age of revolution. "The working-class," Marx says,

> "will, in the course of its development (dans le cours de son développement), replace the old bourgeois society by an association which will exclude classes and their antagonisms, and there will no longer be any political power in its proper sense (il n'y aura plus de pouvoir politique, proprement dit), since political power is nothing but the official sum (le résumé officiel) of the antagonisms obtaining in bourgeois society."[13]

This monumental change cannot take place, however, within the old social structure. Hence, the proletariat must overthrow the present

order of rule and seize power for themselves as the last act of political power after which the reconstruction of the socialist society will begin. Marx, Engels, and Lenin all envisage a new society without a State, but they advance various arguments for socialist politics after the revolution, such as suppression of the bourgeoisie and the direction of the energies of the workers. These socialist leaders believe, nevertheless, that the proletarian State is only a temporary phase of revolution, and consequently it will "wither away," so to speak, and make way for the complete freedom and community of the decentralized, classless society. Buber accepts their line of thought as part of "utopian" socialism to the extent that they believe that the political principle will be superseded by the social one. (By political principle Buber means the coercive principle of central government; and the term social principle refers to the principle of inner cohesion, collaboration, and mutual relationship in free societies.) Although he also advocates the reduction of political power, Buber totally rejects the Marxian dialectic between the demand for the supersession of the political by the social principle on the one hand and the incontestible persistence of it on the other. Buber points out that the Marxian theorists cannot tell us how long after the final victory of the revolution we must wait before its consummation. We are left with nothing but a vague hope in some future apocalyptic event in which society will miraculously leap

from centralization to free association, from compulsion to true community. But what is there to stimulate this transformation in a State that has "devoured society altogether"?[14] Moreover, why should the leaders of the revolution give up their power as the respresentatives of the "dictatorship of the people"? Buber concludes that the paradox in Marxian socialism permits the use of "means" that adulterate as well as contradict the "end." Buber does not think it is wise to affirm such a radical faith in a future reversal of adverse conditions if one does nothing towards gradually achieving that turning point in the present situation. He says:

> As against this the 'utopian' or non-marxist socialist desires a means commensurate with his ends; he refuses to believe that in our reliance on the future 'leap' we have to do now the direct opposite of what we are striving for; he believes rather that we must create here and now the space now possible for the thing for which we are striving, so that it may come to fulfilment then, he does not believe in the post-revolutionary leap, but he does believe in revolutionary continuity. To put it more precisely: he believes in a continuity within which revolution is only the accomplishment, the setting free and extension of a reality that has already grown to its true possibilities."[15]

For Buber, then, true revolution is the result of the daily regeneration of society from within. In the spirit of prophetic eschatology, the "utopian" socialist, so to speak, has one eye on Utopia and the other on the immediate situation in which he hopes to materialize some aspect of the perfect society. Buber writes, "The Utopia of the so-called Utopians is pre-revolutionary,

the Marxist one post-revolutionary."[16] We might say in sum that Buber believes in social evolution rather than political revolution.

We are now ready to ask two important questions of Buber: what exactly is your Utopia like, and what concrete methods do you suggest for achieving it? We know that he advocates the renewal of true community, yet this reality has been dealt with thus far as a general philosophical ideal of society. What kind of economic and administrative activities could we expect in authentic communal life? From the point of view of the "utopian" socialist, how does the ideal society establish, organize, and maintain itself?

In a line of development leading from Saint-Simon to Fourier and Owen the elementary features of the new social order were first envisaged, says Buber. He explains that the history of "utopian" socialism began when the ascendancy of the social principle over the political one was thought of as both the practical scheme and the ultimate aim of social evolution. In _De la Réorganisation de la Société Européenne_ (1814) and _Le Système Industriel_ (1821) Saint-Simon argues that mankind has entered an epoch of crisis in which the existing régime would be eventually replaced by _le régime industriel_. Society has formerly been under a "government," but now it was to come under an "administration" made up of the natural leaders of society, the leaders of its production. The militarists and the politicians will no longer be able to impose themselves on society as a distinct and special class.

What remains of a necessary police force will not constitute a government in the old sense. This new structure of society, according to Saint-Simon, will emerge spontaneously from a new complex of industrial associations among the messieurs.[17] In Buber's estimation, Saint-Simon established the significance of the demise of the State and the rebuilding of society by means of small social units, but he failed to comprehend the complete nature of those social units. Buber credits Fourier and his most important pupil, Considérant, with the further insight that the local social units would be based on joint production and consumption (association communale sur le terrain de la production et de la consummation). However, the speculative utopianism of Fourier's La Theorie des Quatre Mouvements et des Destinées Générales (1808) and Traité d'Association Donestique Agricole (1822) had to be transcended by the practical experience of the Cooperative Movement and the experiments of Owen before the socialist movement advanced to a clearer understanding of genuine community. Buber explains that according to Owen the minimal prerequisites of true community include not necessarily common ownership, but rather a binding together of property, not equality of expenditure, but rather equality of rights and opportunities. As distinct from Fourier, personal possessions can stand side by side with common ones. Furthermore, Owen teaches as a major principle that only a just ordering of the individual communal units can establish a just

order in the total society. Now, Buber thinks that these men are the forerunners who laid down the foundation of "utopian" socialism. These principles, however, are taken up again and expounded more profoundly by three other socialist who have greatly influenced Buber's thought; they are Proudhon, Michael Kropotkin, and Gustav Landauer who was both Buber's teacher and close friend.[18]

The régime industriel of Saint-Simon, Buber says, does not signify a new framework for the whole society but Proudhon's federalism does. Proudhon sees the ideal society in terms of two modes of structure. The economic structure will consist of a federation of moderately sized and relatively autonomous groups in both industry and agriculture. Production will be based on mutualism. He says:

> "Reciprocity exists when all the workers in an industry, instead of working for an entrepreneur who pays them and keeps their products, work for one another and thus collaborate in the making of common products whose profits they share amongst themselves."[19]

The "agrarian-industrial federations" will interpenetrate and inter-relate with the political structure, which rests on the decentralization of power, the division of authority, the guarantee of the maximum degree of autonomy to communes and regional associations, and the widest possible replacement of bureaucracy by a looser and more direct control of affairs within natural groups.[20] Proudon states: "Through the grouping of individual strengths and the inter-dependence of the groups the whole nation will become a body."

And a real brotherhood of mankind can be constituted from the various peoples, as federation of federations. It is this scheme of communes becoming federations and these becoming larger federations that Buber adopts in his socialist thought.[21] He thinks, however, that Proudon leaves an essential question unanswered, "How must the units be constituted so that they can federate into a genuine popular order, a new and just social structure?"[22] Buber turns next to Kropotkin for further insight into the inner nature of the natural groups that federate to form the new society. Kropotkin believes that the natural groups will unite their efforts through mutual agreement. He also says:

> "Personal initiative will be encouraged and every tendency to uniformity and centralization combated. Moreover this society will not ossify into fixed and immovable forms, it will transform itself incessantly, for it will be a living organism continually in development."[23]

In 1896 Kropotkin described the new society as one in which we find "the fullest development of individuality combined with the highest development of free association in all its aspects, in all possible degrees and for all conceivable purposes."[24] Buber comments, "No equalization, no final fixation—that is Kropotkin's basic idea, and it is a healthy one. . . . Such a structure means mobilizing the social and political spontaneity of the nation to the greatest possible degree."[25]

Kropotkin who is often called an anarchist looks upon the State as the ultimate enemy of the communities and federations

based on individualism and voluntarism. At this point Buber no longer follows Kropotkin's line of thought but neither does he condone the State that is run by politicians. It is misleading to identify "the centralist State with the State in general," Buber says. He sees value in a popular State that operates as an impermanent, readily and easily adaptable framework within which the individuality of small associations may freely develop and consolidate. Over against the centralist State, which he totally rejects, Buber affirms a federalist form that he calls communitas communitatum.[26] He credits Landauer with the clearest insights into the nature and status of the State in a socialist society. Buber admits with Landauer that people are not always able to live together rightly of their own free will. In consequence, the degree of incapacity for a voluntary right order determines the degree of legitimate compulsion that may be administered by the State. "Nevertheless the de facto extent of the State," Buber observes, "always exceeds more or less--and mostly very much exceeds--the sort of State that would emerge from the degree of legitimate compulsion."[27] In the article, "Society and State" (1951), Buber refers to the excessive, superfluous State as "Government" and the legitimate, necessary State as "Administration." He says, "Administration in the sphere of the social principle is equivalent to Government in that of the political principle."[28] He includes under the classification of Government the "parliamentary

régime," as he calls it, as well as the dictatorship of the Kremlin. We may presume that socialist federalism represents in Buber's mind a prime example of Administration as opposed to Government. He explains that Administration requires only the degree of power that is necessary to carry out its immediate responsibilities. But Government demands more power than is required by the given conditions, and it acquires this "political surplus," to use Buber's term, on the grounds that the nation must be protected against external and internal instability. As long as a latent state of crises exist between nations and within every nation, Buber argues, the politicians think they are justified in not setting a limit on their privileges and powers. Therefore, "the political principle is always stronger in relation to the social principle than the given conditions require. The result is a continuous diminution in "social spontaneity."[29] Because Buber believes that "social spontaneity" is the necessary foundation of society, he distrusts the modern State as we know it in western democracy. Our democracy works within a fixed structure of Government which he opposes. It should be understood that Buber does not reject power as such but rather the accumulation of excessive power and the misuse of that power by political figures. It is this tendency in his opinion that makes Government a barrier to the full realization of the social principle. Thus, Buber believes that mankind must "strive towards a continuous

change in the nature of power, to the end that Government should, as much as possible, turn into Administration."[30] This is his way of affirming to a large extent the socialist doctrine of "the dissolution of the State."

It must be admitted that the often repressive dictatorship of the Communist State has offered the compensation of directing the resources and energies of the socialist countries towards the realization of a fair stardard of living. This does not mean, however, that the Communist system is superior to that of the West nor that those socialist societies are any closer to that indefinite time when the "means" will no longer contradict the "end" for which they strive. Therefore, in spite of the often amazing progress of nations like Russia and China, few westerners would want to exchange Marxian socialism for parliamentary democracy, that is, a one party nation for a multi-party system with free enterprise. Hence, we are able to sympathize fully with Buber's criticism of that line of socialist thought and practice. However, it is not easy to understand why he fails completely to take the fruitful possibilities of western democracy into account. Although our form of government includes a central seat of power, the political principle is shaped in accordance with the requirements of federation and community. Local and regional autonomy is not nullified by the presence of a central parliament. Unfortunately it does not occur to Buber that democratic government could encourage

the growth of true community by insuring an orderly but flexible setting for personal initiative and free association. In the end, one wonders if voluntaristic federalism would do the same? Buber acknowledges that a society based on freedom requires a limited State and Administration, that is, natural leadership arising from the community. In other words, Buber admits with Landauer that a limited degree of order must be imposed on society. But who has the right to define the powers allocated to the "legitimate State"? How will the federation of regional and rural communities be protected against the procurment of "political surplus" by the agency called an Administration? In my opinion, Buber and Landauer have admitted the possibility of political authority without adequately working out the resulting tension of order and freedom in a democratic manner. Their fundamental ideal of freedom is therefore open to abuse by natural leaders who seek power in itself and then maintain their position in the community and federation by unscruplous methods. Could it be that Buber is näive enough to suppose that such men would not find their way into the communal society of the Utopia? To be sure, he knows that freedom can be easily misused. Buber emphasizes again and again that freedom demands personal responsibility and wisdom, but is that sufficient in the formation of a limited, legitimate State? No, it definitely is not. The limitation and execution of political power must be defined publicly in a constitution that is ratified by the

communities of the federation. The constitution functions then as the ultimate will and authority of the people to whom every politician must be subject. Buber argues: "Special power must be accorded to the government . . . in States under a parliamentary régime when a crisis arises; yet in such States also it is the nature of the case that the 'political surplus' should be indeterminate."[31] He is wrong here. The extent of power is fixed by a legislative tradition and usually a written constitution which may be ammended only upon the assent of the members of the federation. By these means powers can be withdrawn as well as bestowed. In addition to legal and constitutional order, the members of a democratic community are able to control and limit the government by the right of vote. The political leaders must submit the platform of their party and their individual ambitions to public approval before gaining office. If elected, those promises and plans become a mandate of the people they serve. All political figures, even in times of crisis, must finally answer to their constituency. And the central figure of authority, such as the president and the prime minister, is responsible to a political party and a body of public representatives as well as the will of the people. In a democracy the elected representatives constitute the "natural leadership" of the people, to use Buber's term, and parliamentary procedures make it possible for the people to choose through their representatives the policies

and laws that will order their society. Hence, parliamentary democracy secures the rule of a society over its State by two basic methods, the free electorate and the constitution. Now, it does not seem that the "utopian" socialists from whom Buber draws his ideas offer the members of their communities such vital safe guards against the loss of freedom. Buber would probably argue that the act of voting individually separates the members of the community from one another. At one point in his book, Paths in Utopia, he seems to suggest that the right to vote turns out to be only another way that the political masters can extend the process of "atomization." Buber mentions Proudhon's idea of some form of group voting by communal units, but the idea is not developed any further.[32] He would most likely refuse a constitution as an integral part of his socialist ideal because such a document would establish the limited State as a permanent institution of society. Whatever the reasons might be, Buber does not include these devices as basic elements of his political theory. He only makes the dubious assumption that the limited State will voluntarily restrict its powers and gradually pass away as the social principle takes over all areas of society. But is this socialist mythology any more promising than the Marxian one? Would it not be more realistic to work for a proper balance of freedom and order in society rather than the subjugation of one by the other? This latter alternative has been chosen by Buber, but the former one is the goal and general

achievement of parliamentary democracy. In the final analysis, my basic criticism of Buber's social philosophy is this: he sees the value of a limited State but he has not made sufficient provisions for the integration of order and compulsory legislation in the context of freedom, i.e. free association in society. His lack of appreciation for fixed principles and structures would leave a citizenry without direction of social spontaneity and without protection of liberties.

Before presenting the final criticism, a few words of appreciation would seem appropriate. It is not without reason that non-Marxian socialism has captured the imagination of many people in western democracies. And our capitalistic society has probably benefited from a limited socialization of its political and economic institutions. The various welfare programs and the moves towards more local administration are developments applauded by many politicians and citizens alike. Thus it is not surprising that certain aspects of Buber's socialist challenge should sound relevant nowadays. It seems to me particularly important for a democracy to guard against over-centralization, the loss of community, and the irresponsible assumption that legislation will solve our social problems. We must strive to retain local autonomy and develop genuine community as much as any socialist society. The human spirit of the populace must remain the master of the "power structure" if the "democratic process" is to have a

prominent place in the future of man. But the spirit of man needs the nurture of I-Thou relationships in order to be master and to endure the test of our highly structured civilization. The momentum of our complex institutions will, as Buber warns, crush us if we allow ourselves to become "machines" rather than men of dialogue. Finally, we must never forget that in the great democratic experiment of the West our social structures will become only as wholesome and just as the spirit of the citizenry. Democracy is realized by men of integrity who hate prejudice and love peace, who seek brotherhood and fight against privation. As Buber points out, legislative reforms and other structural changes are effective only when they express and reinforce a renewal that is already operative in society. In a few words, we should heed Buber's admonition to restore the power of the spirit in twentieth-century society.

Another criticism of Buber's line of socialist thought comes from Paul Tillich who knew Buber from the days in Germany when they both participated in the development of religious socialism. Buber refers to Tillich as "a Marxist thinker," and he cites Tillich's admission that "Marxism has never, despite its animosity to Utopias, been able to clear itself of the suspicion of a hidden belief in Utopia."[33] Tillich recalls: Buber "never was a politically active member of the small group of men and women who called themselves religious socialists in postwar Germany,

but he was a friend and adviser of the movement."[34] Tillich explains that "Buber, like all religious socialists, accepts the criticism of bourgeois society by Marx while rejecting the anti-religious bias of Marxism."[35] However, the affinity ends here because Tillich disagrees with Buber's negative view of the State:

> "Buber's highly spiritualistic interpretation of religious socialism . . . leaves the state, the political power, almost completely to the 'demons,' to an absolutized 'I-It' relationship. Such a surrender is not warranted. Even the state has potentialities for an 'I-Thou' relationship. It can be considered as one of those spiritual forms which for Buber belong to the third type of 'I-Thou' relation. And there is no reason why this should not be so, if everything created is included in the divine and can be consecrated. Here is the point over which the religious socialists disagreed with Buber, and it is the reason why he kept himself at the fringe of the movement."[36]

In my judgment, Tillich gives us an excellent option to Buber's very qualified acceptance of government, and the over-all effect of the I-Thou philosophy would not be lost by seeing the State as one of _die geistigen Wesenheiten._ Although we can be fairly confident that Buber would never elevate the State to that high status, it should be remembered that politics are not "left to the demons," as Tillich interprets Buber's view. Buber wrote in 1930:

> "The political 'serpent' is not essentially evil, it is itself only mislead; it, too, ultimately wants to be redeemed. It does not avail to strike at it, it does not avail to turn away from it. It belongs with the creaturely world: we must have to do with it, without inflexible principles, in naked responsibility."[37]

Hence, Buber holds, in the end, to the hope of a redeemed world in which everything is in God and made holy before God, a totally sacred world in which the division of the "holy" and the "profane" is overcome, and the messianic vision of the Kingdom of God is fulfilled on earth.

CHAPTER XV

THE WAY TO ZION

In chapter thirteen we left the story of Zionism with the Balfour letter in which Britain pledged assistance to the establishment of a "home" for the Jewish people in Palestine. Although that document marks one of the truly great moments in Jewish history, it was only a beginning point on the way to Zion, a way that proved to be long and bloody, a way that extends even today into the far distant future. In this chapter we will consider the problems that have particularly occupied Buber's attention.

Perhaps the most difficult problem for the Jewish settlement has resulted from the fact that the Holy Land was already populated by Palestinian Arabs. And the question of territorial rights is still the occasion of the most bitter disagreement and even war between the Arabs and the Jewish immigrants. Both claims to the land are based on rather confused political and historical situations. The Arabs regarded the McMahon letter of 24th October, 1915, as their Charter. This letter was sent by Sir Henry McMahon on behalf of the British Government to Shereef Hussein who was negotiating for the Arab cause of independence, but the parties concerned interpreted the statement differently. The letter

says: "The districts of Mersina and Alexandretta and the portions of Syria lying to the west of the districts of Damascus, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo cannot be said to be purely Arab, and should be excluded from the proposed limits and boundaries."[1] The whole crux of the matter is this: was Palestine within or outside of the boundaries given in the above proviso? In 1918 a Commander Hogarth visited Hussein on behalf of the British Government and made it clear then that Palestine was one of the parts of the Turkish Empire to which Arab independence after the war was not promised. A similar clarification was given in 1922 by the Home Secretary, then Winston Churchill. However, despite whatever might have been stated later, unfortunately the Arabs did believe at the time that Palestine was designated as an area meant for Arab independence, and the Shereef gave his support to the Allied cause on the basis of his interpretation of the McMahon letter. We have mentioned earlier the letter that the Jews claimed as their Charter, the letter known as the Balfour Declaration. This correspondence greatly strengthened the Jewish support of the Allied cause, but the expected rewards were in direct contradiction to the hopes of the Arabs. The Palestine Royal Commission (Peel Report) acknowledges that "Lord Robert Cecil in 1917, Sir Herbert Samuel in 1919 and Winston Churchill in 1920, spoke and wrote in terms that could only mean that they contemplated the eventual establishment of a Jewish State. Leading British newspapers

were equally explicit in their comments on the Declaration."[2] When the Great War ended and negotiations began, the Arabs felt that they had been cheated; and in the years that followed the Jews often felt let down as well. Both Jews and Arabs bitterly complained about the lack of a clear statement and definition of boundaries in the McMahon letter and the Balfour Declaration. Perhaps the criticism is too strong but there might be some truth in Richard Williams-Thompson's charge:

> "One is left with the impression that in both cases the British Government was trying to be too clever. It was a great pity. Had those letters been properly and clearly worded to leave no doubt in the minds of the recipients, had the writers made it quite clear to the recipients exactly what they had in their minds— then I believe that the Palestine Problem would not exist to-day."[3]

The Jews and the Arabs were not, of course, left without compensations. In 1920 the Peace Conference issued Mandates for Palestine, Transjordan and Iraq to Britain and the Mandate for Syria to France. The draft Mandate for Palestine was confirmed by the council of the League of Nations on 24th July, 1922, but already in February of that year an Arab delegation had informed the Colonial Office "that the people of Palestine could not accept the Balfour Declaration or the Mandate and demanded their national independence."[4] This protest was answered in June 1922 by the Churchill Memorandum which reaffirmed that "the existence of a Jewish National Home in Palestine should be internationally guaranteed, and that it should be formally recognized to rest

upon ancient historic connections."[5] It is rather surprising to hear the Secretary of State for the Colonies put forward the clearly Zionist doctrine of a historic claim in Palestine, yet one must admit that such a claim is understandable. Some religious Zionists, one of which was Buber, even added a theological bent to the doctrine by arguing that the land had been given to the Jews by God. But the Arabs had another type of historic connection that is probably more binding than the one announced by the Zionists and confirmed by the British Government. The Arabs have tilled, lived and died on the soil of Palestine for hundreds of years. The fact that the Jews left it long before the Arabs came is, from the Arab's point of view, no claim to the land. If Jews are to be allowed to enter Palestine under British policy and protection, the Palestinian Arabs argued—at least give us adequate educational facilities, more medical services, better methods of cultivating, forestry, etc. so that we can compete with the Jews on equal terms. Some such benefits were derived from the Jewish settlers themselves, but the situation still remained analogous to the invasion of the Europeans in the New World. The more powerful and prosperious newcomers prevailed. The indigenous and underprivileged people were not able to cope with the more advanced immigrants. In the case of Palestine, the plans for a National Home for the Jews proceeded rapidly and efficiently. The Jews continued to buy up land that was worked

by the poor _fellaheen_, Arab farm labourer, but usually owned by wealthy Arab landlords. This situation has always been embarrassing to the Jewish socialists who preach social justice while their purchase of land made local Arab farmers homeless and jobless. Arab resentment inevitably intensified as a result of the success of the Jewish colony and the growth of Arab nationalism in the Middle East. Consequently the British Manadate was faced with periodical outbreaks of violence in the populace, terrorist activity by both Jewish gangs and Arabs, and one official investigation after another into all this disruption. It became increasingly evident to all concerned that both sides were ready to press their claim to the land to the point of war. Was there any solution? In July 1937 the Peel Report recommended the partitioning of Palestine, but that proposal was dismissed by the Woodhead Report in the next year. In 1938 the situation remained critical, and the British Government called a round-table conference of Jews and Arabs—but to no avail. All proposals were rejected. The following year another While Paper on Palestine was also denounced by both sides. Even the League's Manadate Commission rejected it as a negation of the Mandate. Then attention was drawn away from the Jewish-Arab conflict by the larger events of the Second World War, yet there was no compromise on the Palestinian scene.

It is at this point in the story that Martin Buber arrived in Palestine in flight from the Nazi persecutions. Buber took up

his new post at the Hebrew University in 1938. Thus he was present to become one of the charter-members of the new organization called *Ihud*, Union or Unity, that was established at the beginning of 1940 in specific response to the Jewish-Arab problem. The organization was largely composed of Jewish intellectuals, many socialists, and all Zionists. *Ihud*'s chairman was Dr. Judah L. Magnes, the real founder of the Hebrew University and a public figure of the first rank. *Ihud* claimed some distinguished members but never more than a few hundred supporters and readers of its literature. This association opposed any solution by force. They feared that an all-Jewish Palestine and State would violate the Biblical, socialist standards of love, justice, and brotherhood. The goal of *Ihud* was the establishment of a bi-national state in Palestine in which the two peoples would enjoy equal rights, regardless of which one was in the majority. This fundamental principle was called parity of numbers and of political rights. Although the *Hatzair*, a Marxist working-class movement, could not accept parity of numbers, they joined together with *Ihud* in the League for Jewish-Arab Co-operation and Rapprochement. The *Hashomer Hatzair* believed in the co-operation of the Jewish and Arab proletarians in order to oppose British imperialism and to modernize the country. *Ihud*'s affiliation with this Marxist group was sometimes a cause of embarrassment because they felt it important to secure the goodwill of the British and American

governments. Judah Magnes and Martin Buber eloquently presented Ihud's case for Jewish-Arab co-operation in a bi-national government (Buber preferred to speak of a bi-national country) before the Anglo-American Inquiry Commission in 1946. Their testimony made a deep impression, and it is clear from the recommendations of the Commission that Ihud's view had an influence on the official report.[6] In fact, the Commission urged that a bi-national government be set up in Palestine immediately. But strategic and diplomatic problems were arising to strain the unity of the Allied Powers. Furthermore, the new Labour government of Great Britain was not at that time in any way prepared to implement the recommendations of the Commission.[7] In the end the good intentions and statesmanship of the Ihud Association must be admired but their hopes were too idealistic and out of tune with the times. They basically functioned as a pressure group that was more resented by the masses than respected and heeded. Ernst Simon evalutes the early Zionists of Ihud as follows:

> "Ihud was composed of intellectuals who in their political thinking had gone beyond the notion of the state, believing that the social and political conditions of modern life required broader and more comprehensive forms of national and social organization. They did not understand the inner logic of a nationalist movement that was seeking belatedly to obtain what other peoples had long enjoyed: the concentration of its people in some one territory with at least a minimum of political 'sovereignty.'"[8]

We might add to Simon's statement that the Arab nationalist movement

was seeking belatedly their independence and self-government as fervently as the Jews. The idea of a bi-national state offended their national feelings and threatened their aspirations even more. The Palestinian Arabs had always refused to form an Arab Agency as a counterpart to the Jewish Agency because they believed that such a move would compromise their case. In other words, they would do nothing to imply that the Jews had an equal right to settle in Palestine.[9] The proposals of Ihud failed to take into account the fact that the Arabs would never consent to a bi-national state for the same reason, the same uncompromising attitude. Hence, the notion of compromise and co-operation remained quite unpopular in the mind of both the Jewish immigrants and the Palestinian Arabs. There was an increasingly small place for the Arab in the average Jew's dream of Zion, and in like manner, the Arab could find in his heart less tolerance for the presence of the aggressive Zionist. This drama was clearly nearing its bloody climax.

When Weizmann called the first postwar Zionist Congress together in December of 1946, it was found that the movement had been taken over by the militant Zionists of Palestine under the leadership of Ben-Gurion and the American group led by the fiery rabbi, Abba Hillel Silver. They were obviously tired of moderation and were committed to statehood for the Yishuv at any cost. As young men, Weizmann, Buber and others of their faction, had brought the East European Zionists to control, but now a new era

of Zionism had come. Weizmann even lost his seat as president, an honour he had held for decades. In 1947 the British Government wisely referred the whole Palestine problem to the United Nations, through whom the ill-timed plan for partition gained international approval. But the course of the conflict was now being carried by its own momentum. As the British troops withdrew, the newly formed Arab league increased terrorist activity in Palestine. Ben-Gurion and his cabinent proclaimed the independence of the Republic of Israel on 14th May, 1948, and the first large scale Arab-Israeli war ensued.[10] Martin Buber tells us that he was writing his book, Two Types of Faith, "in Jerusalem during the days of its so-called siege, or rather in the chaos of destruction which broke out within it."[11] He refers to the war as the "most grievous of the three."[12] Perhaps he meant that in his life the war in Palestine ranked not only alongside the two World Wars but was for him the most painful to bear. This reaction would be quite understandable because the war and the new militant State of Israel forfeited nearly all he had hoped for in Zion. Instead of co-operation in Palestine, the country was ravaged by fighting, and there was now a Jewish State that opposed any bi-national administration. Furthermore, Buber has not always agreed with the ideas and policies of Ben-Gurion. In an address of 1957 he made several out-spoken criticisms of Ben-Gurion, one of which follows:

> "Behind everything that Ben-Gurion has said on that point (the meaning of Zionism), there lies, it seems

> to me, the will to make the political factor supreme. He is one of the proponents of that kind of secularization which cultivates its 'thoughts' and 'visions' so diligently that it keeps men from hearing the voice of the living God. This secularization takes the form of an exaggerated 'politization.' This 'politization' of life here strikes at the very spirit itself. The spirit with all its thoughts and visions descends and becomes a function of politics. This phenomenon, which is supreme in the whole world at present, has very old roots. Even some kings in Israel are said to have gone so far as to employ false prophets whose prophesying was merely a function of state policy."[13]

It seems clear from this attack that Buber was quite angry about the defeat of spiritual Zionism in the recent decades of Israeli history. He even associates the present government with that development of ancient Jewish history which he looks upon as the lowest and most tragic period. However, Buber did not allow his religious fervour and social idealism to push him to the point that compromise and adjustment to current events would be impossible. In an address to the American Friends of Ihud in New York, April of 1958, Buber said:

> "I am no radical pacifist: I do not believe that one must always answer violence with non-violence. I know what tragedy implies: when there is war, it must be fought."
>
> "I have accepted as mine the State of Israel, the form of the new Jewish Community that has arisen from the war."[14]

Yet he also declares in this address that he accepts the present situation only as a point from which Zionists can work towards true community and more co-operation between Arabs and Jews.

Although Buber's kind of Zionism and the Ihud's policy

seems anachronistic to many contemporary Israelis, Buber correctly points out that the spirit of Ihud is as relevant as ever. In the aforementioned speech to the American Ihud group he concludes, "There can be no peace between Jews and Arabs that is only a cessation of war; there can only be a peace of genuine cooperation."[15] If any militant Israeli wishes to argue that there is nothing to be said against a peace based on a balance of power and military threat, then serious enough thought has not been given to the problems of modern Israel and the consequences of the present hostility. Ernst Simon brings these ill effects to our attention in his article, "The Costs of the Arab-Jewish Cold War." Simon is a leading member of Ihud, a professor of education at the Hebrew University, a former co-editor with Martin Buber of the monthly Der Jude, and he was one of the instructors at the Freies Jüdisches Lehrhaus of Franz Rosenzweig in Frankfort. He says that the state of affairs in the Middle East has brought about "an ideological militarism, with all its attendant dangers for culture and education." In Israel a very substantial percentage of the national income has to be earmarked for military purposes; the new immigrants are indoctrinated and trained in military service before entering the productive society; agricultural and industrial ventures are hindered by the need first to take strategical and tactical positions into account; the export market is also continually under threat of boycotts, blockades, and closure of vital waterways.

And for the more brilliant students, the compulsory military service will cause a permanent loss in their intellectual and professional careers. Worst of all, the constant talk of war generates new fear and prejudice in the young people. In a few words, Simon believes that even cold war costs far too much. He admits that a bi-national state is no longer feasible, but he still hopes for "the larger unity of the peoples of the Middle East, which in turn would form part of the United Nations."[16] Indeed, this present goal of Ihud has been made even more timely and urgent by the second major Arab-Israeli war of 1967. But that same war has unfortunately made peaceful, non-militant relations between Israel and her Arab neighbours more difficult and more unlikely than ever before. In the long run war should not pay, but in current history these confrontations have brought the Israelis more territory and greater prestige as an effective power in the Middle East.

Resettlement and social organization in Palestine is another significant problem that has occupied Buber's attention and careful study. There are three types of social organization among Jewish rural settlements. Of these the Moshavah (or settlement) is simply the traditional village based on private property and free enterprise. The other two, the Moshav-Ovdim (or small-holders settlement) and the Kvutza are co-operative. The Moshav-Ovdim retains many individualist features, whereas in the Kvutza

not only all economic functions but social ones as well are strictly co-operative and socialistic in principle. (Kvutza is the Hebrew equivalent of "group." In the literature of the Kvutzot, the term Kvutza is used alternately with Kibbutz, which has practically the same meaning. But Kibbutz refers to groups which are preparing to settle a Kvutza as well as the larger organizations created by the federation of several Kvutzot. To avoid confusion, the present study uses Kvutza only for the rural settlement and Kibbutz for the co-ordinating organizations.)[17] In the concluding chapters of his book, Paths in Utopia, Buber makes it quite clear that he sees the Kvutza and Kibbutz as an essential feature of the way to Zion. To be sure, these collective settlements of Israel come about as close as anything can to the scheme of life advocated by Buber and the other so-called utopian socialists, particularly Kropotkin. In the Kvutzot communal socialism emerges out of the realm of ideals into an historical reality. There one finds the decentralized, autonomous communes, banded together voluntarily into free associations of settlements; there co-operative bodies are used as the agencies for selling the Kibbutz products and for securing the Kibbutz purchases. In other words, both production and consumption are organized on a co-operative basis; this is what Buber calls a "Full Co-operative." Within the Kvutza, the local unity of communal living, all members are equal in possessions, labour, and political voice. It is possible for the members of

the *Kvutza* to make "I and Thou" relations a total way of life. However, it must be pointed out that the outward form of socialism does not automatically engender the interpersonal reality that Buber calls "the life of dialogue." From the perspective of his philosophy of human relations, the *Kvutza* might become either the realization of true community or of a mere collective that does not recognize the individual apart from his usefulness for the group. In other words, Buber's concept of community is not simply equivalent to a collective form of life. Now, Henrik Infield, Executive Director of the Rural Settlement Institute, says in his study of co-operative life in Palestine:

> "The *Kvutza* is one example of an experiment in 'communitarian' society formation, which has succeeded. The *Kvutza* has, therefore, done more than prove that the form of its socio-economic organization is practicable. It has established 'the truth of a law' in the same way as a single successful experiment in physical or chemical science."[18]

Buber refrains from such exaggerations and makes a much less boastful assessment of the *Kvutzot*. He is not willing to call them a total success because so many problems still exist in the life of these communities. However, Buber believes that the life of these communes in Palestine have accomplished more lasting results in social reform than any other similar experiment, and hence he cautiously calls them a "signal non-failure." Yet the conclusion of his study of Socialism is the occasion for the rather presumptuous suggestion: "We must designate one of

the two poles of Socialism between which our choice lies, by the formidable name of 'Moscow.' The other, I would make bold to call 'Jerusalem.'"[19] We look next at the reasons for the successes and failures in the Jewish communal settlements.

The Kibbutz movement, in my estimation, has been greatly helped by a fortunate combination of circumstances. During the British Mandate, and even before that period, a large portion of the immigrants to the new rural settlements were well-educated in the agricultural skills and social knowledge of European civilization. These early Chaluzim, or Pioneers, were prepared, therefore, for the task of land development much better than the Palestinian Arabs who occupied the Holy Land. The Jewish Youth Movement in Europe gained many able recruits for the enterprise, thus the new settlements profited from the strength, idealism, and vitality of young adults as well. Then, when the hardships of the project faced the Chaluzim, they were able to remain united in purpose and determination because of a common motivation and heritage. These brave Pioneers were driven on by the strongest and most basic motive: survival. Their life in Palestine meant more than an idealistic alternative to urban life in the West. In Europe they were facing the furnaces of extermination camps and in Palestine the fiery sun of a desert and much Arab hostility. The Chaluzim, however, were not filled with fear and despair as much as the sense of an historical destiny and continuity

with their Biblical ancestors. Their spiritual heritage and socialist dreams gave them "food for the soul," so to speak. Finally, this Chaluziuth, or Pioneer spirit, was backed by much international approval and the financial aid of the Jewish Agency, to mention just one of the many organizations that supported the efforts of colonizing Palestine. The Kibbutz movement might have pioneered the preliminary state of a new social organization, but the application of that incipient pattern will be far from universal for the simple reason that such favourable circumstances occur quite infrequently. Perhaps the same comment might be made about the rise of Communism in Russia. If so, neither Jerusalem nor Moscow offer a new social order for the rest of the world to emulate at will without significant modifications. In fact, it is doubtful that the age of the élite Chaluzim even exists any longer in Israel. The mass exodus of refugees to Israel since the elimination of immigrant restrictions has too often populated the Jewish settlements with a lesser type of individual that Buber calls a "quasi-Chaluzim."[20] These members lack the initiative, the original vision, the dedication to a new humanity, and the case of eastern Jews especially illustrates the frequent lack of good education and advanced skills. Buber has tried to improve the situation by founding at the Hebrew University a school for teachers who are trained to work particularly with the new immigrant groups. The goal of these semi-social workers and teachers is to raise

the general standard of life and education among the unprepared immigrants. In accordance with Buber's philosophy of education, the teacher is concerned with the "whole person" in his total context. It should be mentioned that Buber has also contributed much to the adult education programs that furnish courses of study and lectures for Kvutza members.[21]

The decline of the genuine Chaluzim is not the only serious problem facing the contemporary Kibbutzim. There is now a disturbing amount of internal strife due to differing ideologies. The majority of socialist thought in the Kibbutz movement favours the moderate approach of social reform and gradual change, i.e. social evolution rather than political revolution. On the left side of this main stream of the movement one finds the pure Marxists who claim that the present settlements hinder the coming of a new social order because they neutralize the passion for revolt and total revolution. But on the right wing there are those who oppose social experimentation all together. They maintain that the Kibbutz movement should be viewed as a temporary method of building up the soil and stimulating the general economy of the new State.[22] Religious conflicts also enter into the picture. Among the Kibbutzim the approach to religion various from the aggressive atheism of the Marxists to the advocates of a new Orthodoxy that integrates Socialism and Judaism.[23] Buber is numbered among those who harshly criticize the agnostic Kibbutz members for

ignoring and even rejecting the early religious heritage of the Jewish people. He says they "take over the ambition to realize the ideal of society, but in a secular form, without the bond of faith."[24] And in his mind, Israel is a nation and a faith made one. Some Kibbutzim have attempted to give new nationalistic interpretations to Orthodox rituals and holy seasons. However, Buber dismisses these attempts as a case of "revising religious forms without their religious content. Forms in themselves are nothing."[25] The above problems are frequently compounded by the wide differences in the cultural background of the members. They come together from the Continent, Russia (the Pale), America, Britain, surrounding Arab countries, in fact, from nearly every part of the world. It is not uncommon for these cultural, political, and religious differences to cause dissension in the affairs of the Kvutza. In the local village commune the most troublesome disharmony takes the form of what Infield calls "Kvutza politics." The natural groupings of like-minded members and members of similar customs and language are used by ambitious individuals for the purpose of gaining political support. Like all democracies, the direction of Kvutza politics is altered and sometimes controlled by pressure groups. Those who seek political power must win over the majority to their side. What instrument can compare with the pressure group, whether clique or faction, for this victory?[26] There is another dark side to the Kvutza democracy that is brought

out by Lewis Feuer. He explains that alongside the long public discussions and debates in the Common Hall, most of the planning and management is done in a number of committees, and nearly all members serve on at least one of the committees. He goes on to say:

> "The distribution of power and responsibility safeguards kibbutz democracy, but it has likewise the effect of absorbing the member's life and time into a succession of committee meetings. When you add the general meetings each week to the special committee sessions, and superimpose your night of guard duty, you are lucky to come out with one free evening. The Kibbutz is a group of people who work together, talk together, eat together, think together, play together, and those who wish to dwell within themselves will rebel somewhere against the kibbutz Leviathan."[27]

The last two problems, i.e. internal conflicts and encroachment on privacy, seem to point up one of the basic underlying drawbacks of a way of life based on comprehensive co-operation and total community. Man always wants the presence and acceptance of others but he rightly remains jealous of his right to be an individual. Man finds it equally necessary to have different beliefs and to have time to himself and his primary unit, the family. These noble qualities of human life threaten a very close, tightly interdependent community, hence such groups are not able to allow the desirable liberty of property rights, special privileges, personal preferences in religion and politics, and familial affinity. Those who write about the Kvutza way of life usually mention that the members have difficulty suppressing their desire to be different from, even superior to, the next

member. Common dress, common rooms, communal nurseries, uniform ideology, common property, equal privileges, etc. are not natural to most of us, and should they be? That is the question answered in a confident affirmative by the _Kvutza_ but answered in a quite different way by more traditional societies. In fairness to the _Kibbutz_ movement, we should acknowledge that a minimal degree of privacy and freedom is possible in the compounds. The problem is not one of forcing complete conformity on all individuals but one of finding the proper balance between self-assertion and public control in the context of communal effort and communal rewards. Yet the collective always comes before the individual, and it seems to me that individuality might too easily be compromised for the sake of financial security, co-operation, and solidarity. As this danger becomes more apparent in _Kvutza_ life some groups react by more rigid communism, but other colonies have begun to allow limited private possessions, some changes in dress, and a few separate family dwellings. Such innovations, however, can develop into yet another source of internal strife and even loss of identity. The more a _Kvutza_ forsakes its original collective character the more it becomes like a _Moshav-Ordim_. Both Infield and Buber express grave concern over the internal dissension of the _Kibbutz_ movement because federation is not possible where dissociation goes beyond the point of natural differentiation. And if the movement fails to unify its efforts as well as expand

the application of its principle, the Kibbutzim cannot hope to exert a decisive influence on the larger social organization of Palestine, the Middle East, and finally other areas of the world.[28] Indeed, time will tell whether the Kibbutz experiment foreshadows a new Zion and ultimately a new world order. Nevertheless, it is safe to say that if the Kvutzot and Kibbutzim comprise a main part of the way to Zion, then the Chaluzim have made a good beginning but future generations have a long way to go. In the meantime, the high goals and values of the Kibbutz life at its best should inspire those who choose still to live in the competitive and free society. It is not necessary, in my opinion, to join a Kvutza in order to work for a new sense of brotherhood and social justice in our economic, political, religious, and social patterns. We should remember that the ideals of justice, love, and peace were revered values of Christendom and the democratic experiment long before the socialists began their reforms and communes. If all peoples, whether capitalist or socialist, would lay down their arms and implement these high ideas, perhaps we would find that supposed enemies are actually brothers in a common struggle against the social evils and wickedness that beset us all. These comments lead us to another problem that has received Buber's earnest attention, the problem of international relations and world peace.

The messianic vision of Buber's Hessian Zionism is not limited to the socialist experiments of Palestine. Like Moses Hess,

he sees Jerusalem as the centre of God's Kingdom, the new world of love, justice and peace. Hence, the way to Zion, in the end, must lead from the holy Mount out into all the world. Buber and Hess envisaged again the old prophetic dream of all nations living together in peace under the kingship of the universal God of Israel. But is this a realistic ideal in our world nowadays? If so, what are the means by which better international relations can be achieved? To consider Buber's response to these questions, we consult two penetrating addresses that he gave in the early fifties when the temporary peace after the Second World War was obliterated by the new "cold war." The first is an address, "Hope for this Hour" (1952), given at a parting celebration held at Carnegie Hall in New York at the conclusion of Buber's lecture tour in the United States, and the second is "Genuine Dialogue and the Possibilities of Peace," an address given on the occasion that he received the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade at Frankfurt-am-Main on 27th September, 1953.[29]

In both speeches Buber emphasizes that the world is split into two hostile camps because of what he calls "the crisis of trust," or simply the lack of trust in one another's existence and words. This tragic division of mankind is dramatically demonstrated by such demarcations as the "Berlin Wall," the "38th Parallel," and various demilitarized zones. These blockades, however, are only the outward manifestations of the inner relational problem

of mistrust. Buber admits that it is natural for men to be on guard against deception, betrayal, and hostility. Yet he thinks that the "sickness" of mistrust in our contemporary world has gone much deeper than that ancient tendency of human life. On the international scene the opponents refuse to credit any truth to the way of life and ideas of the other party. It is always assumed that the "others" only speak lies, devise schemes, and propound false ideologies. Hence, Buber points out, this total mistrust breaks down, and even destroys the basis of, any communication. Authentic dialogue is impossible when men confront each other in such radical suspicion, and it is the lack of genuine speech that brings about total war and the unreal peace of a "cold war." Buber explains:

> "War has always had an adversary who hardly ever comes forward as such but does his work in the stillness. This adversary is speech, fulfilled speech, the speech of genuine conversation in which men understand one another and come to a mutual understanding. Already in primitive warfare fighting begins where speech has ceased; that is, where men are no longer able to discuss with one another the sujects under dispute or submit them to mediation, but flee from speech with one another and in the speechlessness of slaughter seek what they suppose to be a decision, a judgment of God. War soon conquers speech and enslaves it in the service of its battle-cries. But where speech, be it ever so shy, moves from camp to camp, war is already called in question. Its commons easily drown out the word; but when the word has become entirely soundless, and on this side and on that soundlessly bears into the hearts of men the intelligence that no human conflict can really be resolved through killing, not even through mass killing, then the human word has already begun to silence the cannonade."[30]

It might be added here that his analysis applies to the holocaust of Vietnam and other "hot spots" as well as the general "cold war" of which they are a part. We might also mention that Buber fails to acknowledge the contest for territory as an equally common cause of war in human history. His admission is even more interesting in light of the fact that this factor plays an important part in the Israeli-Arab wars. Has his Zionist zeal made him blind to one of the major reasons for the Middle East crises?

The awareness of the futility of war, in Buber's judgment, is only the beginning of the path to a peace that is more than an absence of mass killing. In order to accomplish harmony and understanding in the international community, a new type of man must emerge. Buber accuses politicians of using and even encouaging international conflict for the purpose of maintaining internal control in their country. An outside enemy becomes a common threat, hence a principle of unity and a reason for placing more power in the hands of the government.[31] But dialogue between the factions of the world will come only when our representatives genuinely desire peace and are willing to acknowledge the other side as people with some legitimate needs and worthy hopes. Buber does not suggest that we give up our convictions nor that we agree in all points with alien diplomats. The essential prerequisite is that we believe once again that those different from us can be partners in dialogue. In a few words, we must

dare to trust. Then on the basis of trust we can listen, understand, exchange views, disagree, and instruct each other intelligently and peacefully. We should not charge Buber with reducing world politics to the level of abstraction, for the very presentation of these addresses gives us a concrete example of such new diplomacy. In America he stood as a socialist in the heart of capitalism and anti-communist madness. In Germany his presence was more dramatic still. Many Jews openly criticized Buber for accepting the Peace Prize because they viewed the German's offer with utmost suspicion. To them the gesture was only a trick to draw attention away from their former inhumanity to the Jews. Yet Buber overcame such mistrust; he tactfully reprimanded those who were directly and indirectly guilty of the war crimes and then challenged the youth of Germany to work for a new world of peace and brotherhood. Thus, when he could have shown hatred and further alienated the two races, Buber sought to understand, accept, and draw them together as men of dialogue. In my estimation, our world certainly needs more men who think and conduct themselves like Martin Buber. In order to put his thoughts about world affairs in their proper theological context, we quote the concluding remarks from the address given at Carnegie Hall:

> "At its core the conflict between the mistrust and trust of man conceals the conflict between the mistrust and trust of eternity. If our mouths succeed in genuinely saying 'thou,' then, after long silence and stammering, we shall have addressed our eternal 'Thou' anew."[32]

Buber has suggested with a prophetic tone that the Jews would become the "light" in the world leading to a new humanity and that the new Zion in Palestine would be the focal point of that new guiding "light." It is this aspect of his Zionism that seems the least likely to come true nowadays. Feurer reports that the sabras, the native-born youth of the Kibbutzim, hate the Arabs, and were glad to see the left-wing Kibbutzim finally give up their policy of bi-nationalism. While living in the Kvutzot Feurer observed that the children played at killing Arabs, and invented swear words and expressions of their own: "Get killed by an Arab!" "I am Trumpeldor, you are Bedouin." And the child who protests against being left out says: "I'm not an Arab. (Ani lo noladti b'ayith nabala.)" At one compound there were twenty orphans of Yad Mordechai, a former Kvutza named after the commander of the Warsaw Ghetto Fighting Forces and composed of its survivors. Feuer says: "Their teacher told me she felt academic and unconvicing when she spoke to these children of social justice. Their cradles have been death and fire, and their milk has come wrapped in war's flames."[33] Now, is it this new generation in the Middle East that will lead the world towards peace and brotherhood? No one has the right to say--no--but judging from current events, it seems more likely to me that they might initiate the first major exchange of nuclear short-range missiles. What, then, is the future of Israel and Zionism?

Perhaps the majority of Israelis, for whom Ben-Gurion has been a leading spokesman, see Zionism as an ideological anachronism because the great return to the Holy Land has been accomplished. Hence, they are committed to the dangerous task of further securing their presence in the Middle East. In a few words, the future belongs no longer to Zionism but to the new Jewish nation. Martin Buber cannot accept this point of view. For him the independence of the land and the people in Palestine marks only a beginning, a means to the end — Zion. He still holds to the vision of a new social order under the kingship of God. The ultimate Zion could never be less. In one of his last public addresses, "Israel's Mission and Zion," Buber says:

> "Even today there are many Zionists who share this feeling, not alone among the older ones; I myself know a number who came to the country and who continue to dream this dream which has as yet found no fulfillment, the dream of Zion. They hope with all their hearts that this country, as it is, is the first step in the direction of Zion. This quasi-Zionism which strives to have a country only, has attained its purpose. But the real Zionism, the love of Zion, the desire to establish something like 'the city of a great king' (Ps. 48: 3), of 'the king' (Is. 6: 5), is a living and enduring thing. Come, let us awaken this Zionism in the hearts that have never felt it, in the Diaspora as well as here. For here in this country also we need a movement which strives for Zion, aspiring towards the emergence of the rebuilt Zion from the materials at our disposal. We need 'Zionists of Zion,' here and abroad."[34]

CHAPTER XVI

BUBER'S RELATION TO QUASI-RELIGIONS AND THE MEANING OF PROTESTANT FAITH

In his book, Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions, Paul Tillich makes the suggestion that "the main characteristic of the present encounter of the world religions is their encounter with . . . one or more of the quasi-religions which are based on secularism."[1] Tillich is referring here to the "ultimate concern" that expresses itself in our so-called secular society outside of the established religions. Religion, in the broadest sense of Tillich's use of that term, manifests itself in human life as our manner of coping with what we look upon as most important and most real, in his phrase, our "ultimate concerns." Man might express his "ultimate concerns" in terms of God or gods but not necessarily. In our contemporary world many such religious concerns have come to the fore in the secular mind as the traditional religions lose their power to direct our most intense devotion. Tillich says that the new quasi-religions centre in such concerns as the desire for liberation from authoritarian bondage, passion for justice and peace, devotion to scientific knowledge of man and the universe, striving for a

more fully developed humanity, and hope in a progressive transformation of society in a positive direction.[2] Tillich points out that these secular ways of life and thought do not always express a religious character. They take the form of quasi-religion when their particular concern becomes central and ultimate for the persons involved. The phenomena that Tillich calls quasi-religion is, of course, not peculiar to the modern period. Throughout the history of Christian faith there have been many confrontations with other religious aspirations and convictions. Tillich admits that it is nearly impossible to find in historical Christianity a consistent attitude towards the quasi-religions of various ages. However, he maintains that the popular assumption that Christianity has an exclusively negative attitude towards other faiths is quite false. By means of an historical survey of the New Testament and patristic churches, Tillich cogently argues that "early Christianity did not consider itself as a radical-exclusive, but as the all-inclusive religion in the sense of the saying: 'All that is true anywhere in the world belongs to us, the Christians.'" He explains that Christians became confined within their own particularity as a result of the invasion of Islamic tribes into Christendom. In order to defend their Christian way of life against that violent intrusion, the adherents withdrew from any inter-faith relations. As a result the Christians gradually developed a self-consciousness that led them to look upon other

religions as enemies of the true, unchanging faith. That attitude, however, is not intrinsic to Christianity, Tillich argues. Thus he seems to favour a new open, all-inclusive Christian faith that would encounter the quasi-religions in dialogue rather than polemics. Of course, he does not suggest that we dismiss our Christian identity; all other faiths must remain under the judgment of the central event of Christianity.[3]

A similar analysis could be made of the development of radical-exclusiveness in Judaism. We recall from Buber's study of the Biblical faith that he accepts the popular thesis that early Jewish religion incorporated within itself many features of the quasi-religions and cults of the ancient Near East. Buber seems to prize the eclectic and creative spirit of the Jewish people in that classical period of religious development. And the Hasidist community seems to be the only Jewish tradition of the Diaspora that he credits with equal importance. What happened when the people of Israel were driven from their land by two waves of capturers? The rabbinical class probably thought that they were faced with the alternatives of defending Judaism as an exclusive religion in a foreign culture or losing the identity of Jewish life and faith. The radical-exclusiveness of official Judaism apparently offends Jewish eclectic thinkers. We can gain new insights into Buber's religious philosophy by viewing him as a secular-minded Jew who affirms a more all-inclusive Judaism

that freely draws upon the religious resources of modern thought and social movements. We begin this chapter, then, by examining the nature and implications of Buber's relation to the quasi-religiousness that is inherent in humanism, nationalism, and socialism.

Humanism in our times is best described perhaps as a pervasive mood of enthusiasm about the importance and improvement of human life in this world as an end in itself. Such a humanistic tendency underlies Buber's philosophy of dialogue, true community, and his Hebrew humanism. He rejects an other-worldly concept of God and the perfect life. For Buber there is no "god up there" nor is there a heaven at the end of life. God meets us in history, and we are expected to redeem our world and to realize the messianic age in history. Of course, Buber does not deny that God has an eternal life beyond our comprehension nor does he directly argue against the hope of returning to Eternity. But his religious point of view is clearly based on a this-worldly orientation, and he is primarily concerned with the authentic man and his relation to what might be called historical Transcendence. There can be no doubt in our mind that his Hebrew humanism accentuates the quasi-religious character of the humanistic mood of our century. He says, we will remember, that he accepts the type of humanism that affirms an ideal type of man. Buber finds the ideal man in the classical literature of Judaism, and as we might suppose, that

classical man is the authentic man of dialogue, the man who lives in the true community of love and justice. The Israelites failed to live up to that ideal but the divine charge and judgment always remained with them. Having reviewed his socialist line of thought, we are now able to identify that ideal Biblical, dialogical man as a socialist type as well. In fact, when viewed in light of Buber's social philosophy, the I-Thou philosophy takes on the character of a religious socialism, and the Mosaic theocracy also acquires a new meaning for us. The federation of the liberated tribes becomes the archetype of socialist Federalism; Moses becomes an example of the true administrator that does not set up a permanent State; and the true community commanded by the divine Melekh takes on the appearance of the primitive form of the socialist vision of Utopia. Even the emergence of the monarchical government exemplifies a principle of Buber's socialist theory. He explains that pure voluntarism failed, and the Israelites realized that they needed a more stable form of civil order. The king was to act as an administrator with limited power and as a spiritual leader who would lead the people to actualize the true community of Israel. But the earthly kings formed a centralized government instead, and as politicians they religated their responsibility before God to the special religious sphere of the priests and court prophets. The free prophets, then, took up the vision of a free society before God, the ultimate King who wants

men to sanctify every aspect of their life with love and justice. In Buber's interpretation of the history of Biblical faith, therefore, Moses and the major prophets turn out to be religious socialists, in a manner of speaking. At one point in his essay, "The Land and Its Possessors," Buber even attributes several main features of a socialist society to the Mosaic period:

> "For the Bible tells us, and our inmost knowledge testifies to it, that once more than three thousand years ago our entry into this land took place with the consciousness of a mission from above to set up a just way of life through the generations of our people, a way of life that cannot be realized by individuals in the sphere of their private existence, but only by a nation in the establishment of its society: communal ownership of the land (Lev. 25: 23), regularly recurrent leveling of social distinctions (Lev. 25: 13), guarantee of the independence of each individual (Exod. 21: 2), mutual aid (Exod. 23: 4f), a general Sabbath embracing serf and beast as beings with an equal claim to rest (Exod. 23: 12), a sabbatical year in which the soil is allowed to rest and everybody is admitted to free enjoyment of its fruits (Lev. 25: 2-7)."[4]

Because all types of socialism and much humanism have idealistic features in common, it is not surprising that Buber's humanism and socialism would join to form his view of the ideal man in the ideal society. Now, it would appear that Buber's hermeneutics are largely governed by those ideals, which upon closer examination are shown to be the heart of a quasi-religion. The "ultimate concern" of humanism is most explicitly expressed by setting up an ideal human type to which all men are made subject. In like manner, as a socialist, Buber forms in his mind an idea of Utopia, and that new perfect society becomes the goal to which social progress should

move. He admits that the ideal society cannot be planned out in detail; it must be worked out as men live together and strive together for a renewed society. Nevertheless, there is a general ideal, in his opinion, that should dominate and direct the common labours and common inspiration of socialism. The authentic man and the true society represent a mode of Transcendence, it seems to me, to which one devotes himself and before which one judges himself. In my estimation, Buber adopts this quasi-religious element of humanistic and socialist thought and bestows upon it the sanctity and authority of Biblical Judaism. We next consider Buber's relation to nationalism as a quasi-religion.

The nations of the world create "gods" by absolutizing the heritage and destiny of their people, according to Nachman Krochmal, the Jewish historian. "Every nation elevates its own self to the absolute, and worships itself as such. Israel experiences the absolute as that which Israel itself is not and which it can never become, and reveres it as such."[5] Krochmal claims that Israel must teach the nations how to put aside their national idols and turn to the true Absolute. Buber accepts this point of view in part, but adds: "Reverence for the absolute can become the life-principle of a people only when the people itself puts it into practice as a people." In accordance with his theology, he explains that we cannot know the Absolute in itself; we can only know about the absolute Person in his relation

to our particular life. Furthermore, we can point out this God to others only by the actual life of a people. In Buber's words, divine life will be "revealed to the eyes of mankind only through a multitude of individuals, varied in character and intention, yet living in harmony with one another, a human circle around a divine centre." And this is what it means to fulfil the "image of God," tzelem, in our corporeal, earthly life.[6] We can assume that in this line of argument the God above all national gods is the absolute Person, the eternal Thou, the living God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the universal God of the prophets who demanded righteousness, love, and justice in His name. In order to disclose the full implications of what Buber is saying here, we ask, what is the nature of that "people" and that "human circle" through which he believes the true God of mankind will be expressed in history? There is no doubt in my mind that, according to Buber, it is the true community which is defined in the philosophy of dialogue and the non-Marxian socialist theories. Moreover, we recall from previous chapters that Jewish patriotism is an integral part of Buber's theology. Consequently his Zionist ideology identifies the Jews of Palestine as the people who are chosen by God in creation for the purpose of establishing true community in human history. Therefore, the "divine centre" appears to be the God of Isarel, and the Zionist, socialist societies of Israel seem to be the "human circle around the divine centre." It seems

to me that he nobly combats the dangers of nationalism by affirming the eternal Thou as the true King over all nations, but the quasi-religious character of Zionism leads him to view God in part as a national deity. The "ultimate concerns" of humanism, socialism, and nationalism come in the back way, so to speak, and assert themselves as the central meaning of God's will and the final destiny of the Jewish people. Hence, Buber interprets the image of God in man and the will of God in terms of his concept of the ideal man, his socialist line of thought, and his Messian Zionist ideology. In other words, he discerns the Word of God in the Bible and the address of God in history with the preconceptions of modern quasi-religions. It follows that if one adopts Buber's way of thinking, he will also enter the I-Thou relationship with God under the influence of the quasi-religiousness of humanism, socialism, and nationalism. In my rather liberal opinion, this degree of secularization does not present any problem, unless the secular Weltanschauungen cause one to forsake his own formal religion. Has this happened to Buber; does he go too far? Does Buber allow his secular-mindedness to distort his appreciation of organized religion? We probably cannot answer simply-- yes or no.

The critique that has been outlined above might be summarized by saying figuratively that Buber forces God to share his throne with the gods of quasi-religions that are based on secularism. By secularism we mean the affirmation of secular culture in contrast

to, and to the exclusion of, established religious patterns. In a manner of speaking, we could say that Buber "secularizes" Judaism. But before adding a word of caution, I want to express appreciation for what he has done. Many popular forms of established religion nowadays fail frequently to express the convictions, hopes and ambitions of men like Martin Buber. The secularization of Judaism and Christianity is on the whole a sign of new vitality and openness to the world. Secularization goes too far only when our "religionless" life isolates faith from all formality and institutional provisions. It is important, in other words, that we oppose outmoded forms rather than formal religion. In this study we have drawn attention several times to Buber's underestimation of the value of formality, prescribed action, and objectification. Of course, it does not follow that he thereby rejects all form and order in religion and human relations. But his reader is often left confused about the degree of formality he would approve in religion and society. In the end, perhaps he leaves that question for us to answer in our own way and in accordance with our own religious tradition.

We now return to Paul Tillich's book for the purpose of discussing further the Protestant's relation to quasi-religion and secularism. Tillich says that "the sacred sphere is not nearer to the Ultimate than the secular sphere. It (the Protestant principle) denies that either of them has a greater claim to grace than the other; both are infinitely distant from and infinitely near to the Divine."[7] This Protestant religious ideal allows the Christian to be equally

open to, and critical of, the secular and religious spheres of life. Hence, Protestantism often collaborates in its religious interests and energies with quasi-religions. The Protestant movement arose in the atmosphere of the Renaissance, and it was consequently associated with humanistic tendencies from the very first. In fact, the "Protestant principle" itself expresses the fundamental humanistic concern for the life of man in the world. The enthusiasm of the Renaissance for man and his earthly achievements is reflected in the Protestant claim that God is pleased to dwell in the profane realm as well as in the consecrated spheres of religion. Nationalism has also had an important part in the direction of Protestant history from the beginning. Since the reform councils of the fifteenth century and the Reformation of the sixteenth century, the national idea has been a decisive tool in the fight of Christian groups against Rome. We might say that it was a type of Christian nationalism that supported the Reformation and made the Protestant Church an independent establishment in the free nations of Europe. Protestant leaders, it would seem, were able to receive and transform the quasi-religious elements of humanism and nationalism for their own purposes. However, the main stream of Protestant life never engaged in a radical secularization of Christianity. That is, organized religion was not rejected in favour of a spontaneous relation to God through everyday life. Old religious structures were called in question and some were abolished,

but formal religion remained. In the nineteenth century the quasi-religious implications of social renewal were taken more seriously by Protestants than ever before in our history. Movements usually called the Social Gospel or Christian Socialism tried to draw upon the religious fervour in the socialist faith for the purpose of formulating Protestant social ethics. Thus, the Protestant tradition is in recent times, as in the past, open to the work of the Spirit and the Word of God that can be discerned in the quasi-religions. This positive valuation of the secular world makes the relation of Protestantism to the quasi-religions both dialogical and productive. The danger of the Protestant ideal, of course, is that the acceptance of secularity with such openness may lead to a slow elimination of the religious dimension within the Protestant churches. It might become difficult in certain circumstances to differentiate between secular culture and Christian life. That ambiguity is the main risk we take in advocating a religionless Christianity for the twentieth century.[8] Apparently for Tillich and Buber the reward is worth the risk, and I would hardily agree. One might too radically secularize faith by affirming that the essence of religion is independent of the "expressed knowledge and ordered action of the religions." But having a loose relation to the religious establishment is not the same as rejecting it. To be sure, some secularists would advocate leaving the Church, even disbanding the Church, because of certain backward elements in it.

But it would seem unnecessary for secular-minded Christians to adopt such antagonism towards the Church because the "Protestant principle" gives us the freedom to pursue our religious life both inside and outside of the Church. We are both in the world and in the Church but not committed exclusively to either. This freedom should not imply, of course, indifference to the world or interest in monasticism. The "Protestant principle" also clearly expresses concern for the unity of our "life in God" and our "life in the world." One of Luther's attacks was directed against the _vita religiosa_, the life of _homines religiosi_, the ascetic, austere way of life which places virtue in shuting oneself off from the world.[9] The Protestant Christian believes that man has the task of, to use Buber's phrase, "hallowing the everyday" and reuniting the sacred and profane realms. In sum, Protestantism is a secular Christianity in at least two ways. Firstly, at the heart of our tradition there is the conviction that Transcendence confronts us in the totality of human experience, hence the life of faith is bound to the secular, earthly, human sphere. Secondly, at its best Protestantism has remained open to the quasi-religious resources of secular culture.

There is possibly a third sense in which we could say that Protestant faith is a secular and religionless Christianity. I refer to our attack on rigid and irrelevant religion. The relation between man and the Infinite cannot be confined to one stage of development in a religious tradition because all faith is in someway conditioned by

historical and cultural circumstances. Protestantism involves a constant self-critical discipline on the part of those Christians who are searching for the living Reality of religion in their contemporary situation. It is true that dogmas, rituals, and moral codes must always be subject to change, which means questioning the old forms and experimenting with new ones. We lose the very spirit of Christ if we are not able to say with Him that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. Protestants join with the free prophets and Jesus in what Tillich calls "an attack against religion for the sake of religion."[10] Perhaps Protestant Christians have not always been faithful to this self-critical struggle with Protestant religion. An open dialogue with the secular quasi-religions of our times might encourage and renew our fight against becoming an authoritarian and defensive religion that is frightened by reform, even reform as radical as that which established our existence as a protest group. Would it not be a cruel irony if the church of the Reformation allowed itself to become another instrument of religious despotism? Above all, we should not let the challenge of quasi-religions reduce the Protestant Church to an isolated and rigid state. Protestants have an inspiring example in Buber of fearless confrontation, even collaboration, with the quasi-religiousness of our contemporary culture. Buber epitomizes the fight of the "spirit over structure." He would rather forsake all "religion"

than submit to its possible tyranny. Whether in quasi-religious or exclusively religious groups, however, the fight against irrelevant and rigid religion always takes the form of new religiousness. One myth challenges another, a new dogma replaces an older one, another cult has more appeal than the traditional rituals, different principles and agencies of authority arise to meet the present need of spirituality. Buber mistakenly elevates the incipient stage of this religious cycle to the highest rank. At this point he reflects a tendency in nineteenth century thought to glorify the primitive situation as the high point to which man should return in accordance with the spirit of current times. This is no doubt a prominent characteristic of his whole thought. The I-Thou relation is more primitive and exalted than the I-It, hence Buber admonishes us to return to this primal way of being in terms appropriate for our complex culture. The loose confederation of small communities came before the centralized governments and is, in Buber's mind, to be preferred to the modern States of our age. He hopes to return to the more simple, intimate community life of an earlier age of mankind. Again, Buber thinks that our spontaneous, formless reponse to God's address in the world, and the structureless, "religionless" encounter with the eternal Thou should be viewed as the apex of human spirituality. The later formalistic developments of an established religion meet with his disapproval. But the brave man who breaks away from the religious structures

finds that he has not escaped the cycle. It seems necessary to accept that there is no adequate spiritual life without an actual, but not principal, dependence on religious structures. This fact, however, should not cause us to discount Buber's protest against dogma, cult, and moral legislation. If we relax our resistance to the movement away from "spirit" and towards "structure," then we could easily lose the "spirit." Buber writes in the indispensable tradition of the prophets and mystics who cry out against on overly confident and secure way of being religious. He reminds us that it is our responsibility to infuse our "structures" with new "spirit," and even evolve new forms in man's search for religious reality. If the critics are right in their charge that the Christian Church is anachronistic and proclaims a meaningless message, surely the problem lies basically in our failure to stay abreast with the current spiritual longings and the non-ecclesiastical religiousness of our times.

In conclusion, a Protestant student can see in Buber's religious ideals his own concern for "hallowing the everyday" and his own "fight against religion for the sake of religion." The spirit of our protest centres in the affirmation of secularity and in a vigilant guard against religious oppression. To this extent, we support the unity of our "life in God" and our "life in the world" as vigorously as Buber. Hence, the Protestant dares to involve himself in the quasi-religions of the world and follow

Christ into all avenues of earthly existence. Like Buber, we are "bound to the world," and like the Hasidim, we attempt to be "open to the world, pious towards the world, and in love with the world."[11]

Summary and Conclusion:

These final remarks will not bring up any new points, rather the main lines of argument and development will be drawn together. Buber indicates that the essence of Judaism and the foundation of his life of faith can be found in Hasidism. Beginning, then, with a survey of his study of Hasidism, we found that he accentuates and praises the Hasidist "pansacramentalism," a way of being religious that is based on divine omnipresence and man's dialogical relation with God in everyday life. Buber reaffirms their semi-mystical faith as the ground of his own religious life and I-Thou philosophy. However, unlike the Hasidim, he tends to set spontaneity and inwardness over against outward forms and calculated responses. In his view of human relations, therefore, formality is distrusted and separated from immediacy and mutuality. The I-It side of human existence and permanent governmental structures, according to Buber, should be overcome and transformed into the life of dialogue. But through the use of Macmurray's "form of the personal" we attempted to balance the I-Thou philosophy by emphasizing the value and even necessity of I-It for the reality of I and Thou. Now, Buber sees the I-Thou relation of man in the world as the place where we encounter God, thus the essence of true religion is interpreted by him to be an immediate, dialogical relation to God in the world. He presents the sphere of organised religion as a declension of

the primal faith-relation in which we respond to the eternal Thou apart from conventions, prescribed action, and formal statements. Consequently, he presents genuine Judaism as a trusting relation with God and Christianity as fundamentally a belief in propositional truth. But we have disagreed in part with Buber's analysis of Christian religion and religion in general. By means of Bultmann's New Testament studies we pictured Christianity as a religion in which belief is fulfilled in trust. In a few words, for the Christian, knowledge about God and relationship with God complement rather than conflict with each other. We drew upon Tillich's thought to argue further that Protestant Christianity in particular integrates formality and freedom, secularity and sacredness. The Protestant would view the alienation of the religious sphere from the so-called secular world as indeed a regrettable state, but the solution would not be found in a religious life that by-passes organized religion in order to embrace the secular life and make sacred the everyday world. In reviewing Buber's thought it seemed that at a few points his approach might be tending in that direction. Hence, in our discussion of his attitude towards dogmas, rituals, and morality, we have tried to develop a slightly revised religious ideal that would clearly acknowledge the value of these elements of religion as well as integrate them into the I-Thou philosophy. It has been suggested that dogmas, cults, and moral rules could be viewed as a type of _Geistige Wesenheiten_, spiritual forms through which we

are able to meet the eternal Thou, or at least look out to the fringe of Transcendence. And Tillich suggests in one of his essays that Buber could even include the State in the same category. Thus, we could look upon our governments and religions as part of that world which is laden with divine address and which is hallowed by our response to the eternal Thou. Of course, such an amendment of Buber's thought would not mean that the State and the religious establishment should form the centre of our life. The life of dialogue that opens up to historical Transcendence remains the heart and meaning of human existence in the world. In the final analysis, Buber is really saying that our "life in God" is united with that "life in the world" which is based on free association and a minimum of established order. And if we set aside his distrust of formality, we are able to suggest a religious ideal that includes both the spirit and structure as means by which God and man become partners in creation and redemption in the everyday situation. There is, to be sure, an important truth for Protestants in the general direction of Buber's religious ideal, namely the free spirit should remain the final guide and authority in man's search for religious reality. If formal liturgies, moral laws, and dogmatics are to function rightly in the Protestant faith, then these structures must be used primarily as constructive aids to deeper religious experience rather than cruel dictates of our reason, conscience, and means of worship.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter 1: An Introduction to M. Buber's Study of Hasidism.

1. Martin Buber, For the Sake of Heaven (New York: Meridian Books, 1958), xii.

2. Martin Buber, Hasidism and Modern Man (New York: Horizon Press, 1958), p. 180.

3. Buber, For the Sake of Heaven, xii.

4. Martin Buber, The Legend of Baal-Shem (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), "Introduction," xiii.

5. Buber's writings relating to Hasidism fall into three general groups. Firstly, there are the accounts of the early Hasidist leaders (Approximately 1750-1850) and their teachings. Short selections of didactic material are presented in Ten Rungs: Hasidist Sayings and The Baal-Shem-Tov's Instruction in Intercourse with God (1928). Apart from simple sayings, as can be found in the above publications, most of the Hasidist teaching at Buber's disposal was a mass of formless and fragmentary material. In this unorganised deposit of Hasidist tradition Buber recognised and developed two literary forms, the short story and the "legendary anecdote," in which a single incident conveys the "meaning of life." (Buber, Tales of the Hasidim: The Early Masters, New York: Schocken Books, 1964, "Introduction," viii, ix.) Literature of this genre includes The Tales of Rabbi Nachman (1907), The Legend of Baal-Shem (1908), and the more complete, refined Tales of the Hasidim, The Early and Late Masters, (1947 and 1948). Buber's chronicle-novel, For the Sake of Heaven, (1943) mentions several figures who also appear in Tales of the Hasidim: Later Masters, but basically the chronicle-novel dramatizes the ambivalent relationship between the Seer of Lublin and the Yehudi. The story gives Buber a medium for presenting his understanding of the Hasidist way of life by means of living situations and personalities without legendary elaboration. The second type of material is exemplified by the essays in which Buber directly discusses Hasidism as a subject of the philosophy and history of religion. These essays are

collected in Hasidism, Hasidism and Modern Man, and The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism. The language of the first and second type of material bears the traces of Hasidist terminology, with which few modern readers would be familiar. Buber explains that in his interpretative work he deliberately preserved the mythical and epic style of the Hasidist sources. He says he does not agree with the postulate that we need to "demythologize" ancient religions into concepts of our time. It is his opinion that no "sermonic teaching" can replace the myth; but there can certainly be "sermonic teachings that are able to renew myth through bearing it uninjured into the present." (Buber, Hasidism and Modern Man, p. 41) The third group of material goes beyond the nature of "sermonic teaching." Each one of the writings in the third group almost demand a separate category. Nevertheless, all the writings commonly share the mood of Hasidism and show that Hasidist concepts have been assimilated into the fabric of Buber's thought. Various literary styles are represented in the group, such as, a series of meditations, The Way of Man (1948); short essays, "Dialogue" in Between Man and Man; an analytical study, "Images of Good and Evil" in Good and Evil; and the earlier book of dialogues, Daniel (1913).

6. Buber, Hasidism and Modern Man, p. 41.

7. Martin Buber, Between Man and Man (London: Kegan Paul, 1947), pp. 13, 14.

8. Buber, Hasidism and Modern Man, p. 179.

9. Buber, For the Sake of Heaven, p. 180.

10. Martin Buber, The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism (New York: Horizon Press, 1960), p. 99.

Buber uses -religion- in a positive way to mean a true relation to the Absolute and also in a pejorative sense, usually with quotation-marks, to designate dogma and cult, i.e. a sacred sphere set apart from profane life.

Chapter II: The Background of Hasidism

1. The major sources for the chapter on the background of Hasidism include:
Martin Buber, "Jewish Mysticism" in The Tales of Rabbi Nachman (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962), pp. 3-18.
Martin Buber, "The Beginnings" and "The Foundation Stone" in The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism (New York: Horizon Press, 1960), pp. 23-88.
Simon Dubnov, History of the Jews in Russia and Poland, Vol. I (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1946).
Gershom G. Scholem, Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1955).
Gershom G. Scholem, On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965).

2. Definition of Zohar: The Sefer Ha-Zohar ("Book of Splendor") or simply Zohar is the sacred book of Kabbalism which was written in about 1275 by a Spanish Kabbalist, Moses de Leon. Its place in the history of Kabbalism can be gauged from the fact that among the whole of post-Talmudic rabbinical literature only the Zohar became a canonical text, which for a period of several centuries ranked with the Bible and the Talmud. The Zohar is written in pseudepigraphic form, almost in the form of a mystical novel. The author is a genius of homily rather than a systematic thinker. His favourite way of putting forward an idea is to work at the mystical interpretation of a Scriptural saying. Under the author's homiletical touch the most unpretentious verses of Scripture acquire an entirely unexpected meaning. The same approach to scriptural interpretation is commonly adopted in the Hasidist movement. Cf. Scholem, Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism, Fifth Lecture.

3. A discussion on the background and nature of Hasidism must continually refer to the conceptions of an original cosmos, a fall into disharmony and man's responsibility for restoring the original order and harmony. For the Kabbalists and Hasidim the whole perspective was apparently suggested by the Hebrew word, yihud. (Cf. Buber, Origin and Meaning of Hasidism, pp. 130f.-for an excellent summary on the concept of yihud.) In the English translation of Buber's writings the phrase, "unification of God" is used to express Buber's interpretation of the meaning of yihud. His phrase will be used in the following chapters of this section but the reader must furnish the proper implications and setting for the phrase. In the present context "unification" refers to that

renewal and wholeness which comes from a restoration of order and harmony. The phrase, "unification of God" must not be thought to suggest that there has ever been a duality in God or that the presence of God in the world loses its multiplicity. The Kabbalists and the Hasidim firmly believed in the mystery of one God who manifests Himself in many places and in many ways at any one moment. Furthermore, "unification of God" involves the creation as well as the Creator. Although divine life is not limited to creation, the creation represents the manifestation of the divine life as Creator. Hence, the problematic nature of creation and the disrupted life of the Creator are resolved together in the same human actions. In the Diaspora the Jews commonly felt that this cosmic restoration would precede the end of the exile and the beginning of a new, united Israel. (Cf. Buber, Ibid., pp. 202-218 for an analysis of the inter-relation of Israel's redemption and the cosmic redemption in Hasidist teaching).

4. Simon Dubnov, History of the Jews in Russia and Poland, Vol. 1 (Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1946), ch. VI and XI.

5. Ibid.

6. Louis I. Newman and Samuel Spitz, A Hasidic Anthology (London: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), "Introduction," lxix.

7. Dubnov, History of the Jews in Russia and Poland, p. 222.

8. Martin Buber, Hasidism (New York: Philosophical Library, 1948) p. 7.

Chapter III: The Kabbalistic Features of Hasidism

1. Martin Buber, The Legend of Baal-Shem (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), p. 37.

2. Martin Buber, For the Sake of Heaven (New York: Meridian Books, 1958), p. 231.

3. Martin Buber, The Way of Man (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950), p. 6.

4. Martin Buber, Hasidism (New York: Philosophical Library, 1948), p. 63.

5. Ibid., p. 7.

6. Martin Buber, I and Thou (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, Second Edition, 1958), p. 82.

7. Ibid., p. 83.

8. Gershom Scholem, "Devekuth, or Communion with God," The Review of Religion, XIV (Jan., 1950), p. 135.

9. Buber, I and Thou, p. 80.

10. Ibid.

11. Scholem, "Devekuth, or Communion with God," p. 121.

12. Louis I. Newman, Great Jewish Personalities in Ancient and Medieval Times (London: Peter Owen, Ltd., 1962), p. 297.

13. Jacob Minkin, The Romance of Hasidism (New York: Macmillan Co., 1935), p. 85.

14. Martin Buber, The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism (New York: Horizon Press, 1960), p. 93.

15. S. A. Horodesky, Leaders of Hassidism (London: "Hasefer" Agency for Literature, 1928), p. 8.

16. Buber, The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism, p. 96.

17. Buber, I and Thou, p. 82.

18. Scholem, "Devekuth, or Communion with God," p. 115.

19. For an example consider this saying which uses sexual intercourse as its model:
"Prayer is a coupling with the Glory of God. Therefore man should move himself up and down at the beginning of prayer, but then he can stand unmoved and cleave to God in a great cleaving. And because he moves, he can attain to a great awakening so that he must reflect: why do I move up and down? Certainly, because the Glory of God stands over against me. And over this he enters into a great rapture." Martin Buber, _Hasidism and Modern Man_, p. 196.

20. Buber, _The Legend of Baal-Shem_, pp. 17-22.

21. Buber, _The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism_, p. 70.

22. _Ibid._, p. 181.

23. For example: by a strange turn of events a simple man finds himself on the throne, while his clever and successful twin ends up in ruin and becomes a subject. Buber, _The Tales of Rabbi Nachman_, "The clever man and the simple man," pp. 71-94.

24. Martin Buber, _Hasidism and Modern Man_, (New York: Horizon Press, 1958), p. 28.

25. Buber, _Hasidism_, p. 170.

26. Buber, _Hasidism and Modern Man_, p. 43.

27. Buber, _The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism_, p. 174.

Chapter IV: The Relation of the Hasidist Community to Rabbinical Judaism and Sabbatianism

1. Martin Buber, Ten Rungs (New York: Meridian Books, 1958), p. 91.

2. Buber, Hasidism and Modern Man (New York: Horizon Press, 1958), p. 207.

3. Compare Martin Buber, Good and Evil (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), pp. 90-98 with the discussion of Hasidism in Martin Buber, The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism, New York: Horizon Press, 1960), pp. 52-57.

4. Definition of elemental urge:
"Elemental urges are those factors in human existence which enable human existence to develop subjectively, though in accordance with a common core which shapes a man partly like all other creatures and partly as a man and an individual endowed with his own peculiar traits. We know these urges under the names of hunger, sex, and the will to power". Martin Buber, Israel and the World (New York: Schocken, 1963), p. 78.

5. Buber, Good and Evil, p. 94.

6. Martin Buber, Israel and the World (New York: Schocken Books, 1963), pp. 176-182.

7. Buber, Hasidism and Modern Man, pp. 56, 57; also, Good and Evil, p. 93.

8. The concept of "direction" appears in Daniel (1913), reappears all through his essays on Hasidism, is basic to the later treatise, "Images of Good and Evil," and is the high point in the public conversation (1957) with the American physchotherapist, Carl Rogers. Martin Buber, The Knowledge of Man (London: Allen and Unwin, 1965), pp. 179, 180.

9. Martin Buber, I and Thou (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, Second Edition, 1958), p. 52.

10. Buber, Good and Evil, pp. 96, 97.

11. Buber, Israel and the World, p. 182.

12. Buber, Good and Evil, pp. 140, 141.

13. Martin Buber, <u>The Way of Man</u> (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1950), p. 9.

14. Buber, <u>The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism</u>, p. 198.

15. When reading the ethical instruction in Hasidist literature most Christians are impressed by the similarity of tone and content between the Christian gospels and Hasidist material. Louis Newman rightly suggests that it would be possible to select a group of Hasidist sayings and tales which might cause uninformed Christians to wonder if they were not reading Christian apocryphal materials of the apostolic age. Cf. Newman's introduction to <u>A Hasidic Anthology</u> (lxx - lxxiii) for further information concerning studies on the relationship of Hasidism and Christianity.

16. Buber, <u>The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism</u>, p. 145.

17. Ibid., pp. 26-29, 40-45, 128-145; also, Martin Buber, <u>The Tales of the Hasidim: The Early Masters</u> (New York: Schocken Books, 1964), pp. 1-35.

18. Buber, <u>The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism</u>, p. 43.

19. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 26.

20. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 27.

21. Israel J. Kasis, "A Re-examination of Hasidism," The <u>Reconstructionist</u> XXII, No. 8 (May, 1957), p. 7.

22. Louis Ginsberg, <u>On Jewish Law and Lore</u>, p. 215; quoted by Kasis, <u>Ibid.</u>

23. Buber, <u>The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism</u>, p. 99.

Chapter V: An Introduction to the Dialogical Principle

1. R. Gregor Smith, Martin Buber (Carey Kingsgate Press, 1966), p. 12.

2. Maurice S. Friedman, Martin Buber: Mystic, Existentialist, Social Prophet--A Study in the Redemption of Evil. Doctoral dissertation for the University of Chicago, June 1950, The University of Chicago Library, Microfilm T 809, p. 25.

3. Hans Kohn, Martin Buber, sein Werk und seine Zeit (Köln: Joseph Melzer Verlag, 1961), pp. 14-17.

4. Martin Buber, Between Man and Man, trans. and intro. by R. Gregor Smith (Collins, The Fontana Library, 1961), pp. 148-191.

5. Ibid., p. 220.

6. Ibid., p. 246.

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid., p. 46.

9. Ibid., p. 182.

10. Ibid.; Buber quotes from Karl Heim's words, Ontologie und Theologie, Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche, neue Folge XI (1930), p. 333.

11. Martin Buber, "Ueber Jakob Böhme," Wiener Rundschau, Vol. V, No. 12 (June 15, 1901), pp. 252-253. This source is quoted by Friedman in Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1955), footnote no. 1, p. 51.

12. Martin Buber, ed., Jüdische Kunstler (Berlin: Jüdischer Verlag, 1903), p. 45. This source is also quoted by Friedman in Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue, footnote no. 1, p. 51.

13. Martin Buber, Das Dialogische Prinzip (Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider Verlag, 1965), pp. 306-307.

14. Ibid., p. 307; also The Legend of Baal-Shem (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), xiii.

15. Ibid., p. 17.

16. Martin Buber, Between Man and Man, p. 32.

17. Martin Buber, Daniel: Dialogues on Realization (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1964), pp. 61-80.

18. Ibid., pp. 91, 95-99.

19. Martin Buber, Reden über das Judentum (Frankfurt am Main: Literarische Anstalt Rütten & Loening, 1923), x-xix.

20. Martin Buber, The Way of Man, According to the Teachings of Hasidism (London: Vincent Stuart Ltd., 1963), pp. 36-41.

21. Martin Buber, Ereignisse und Begegnungen (Leipzi: Insel Verlag, 1917), pp. 28-35. This essay is included in Pointing the Way (N. Y.: Harper and Row, 1963) under the title "With a Monist," pp. 25-30.

22. Buber, Das Dialogische Prinzip, p. 308.

23. Martin Buber, I and Thou (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 123.

24. Paul A. Schilpp und Marice Friedman, eds. Martin Buber (Stuttgart: W. Kohlammer Verlag, 1963), p. 35.

25. Buber, Das Dialogische Prinzip, pp. 305-310.

Chapter VI: The Meaning of I-Thou and I-It

1. Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 3.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

3. John Macmurray, *The Form of the Personal: Persons in Relation* (Faber and Faber Ltd., 1961), p. 61.

4. Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man* (Collins, Fontana Library, 1961), p. 244.

5. Martin Buber, *The Knowledge of Man* (Allen and Unwin, 1965), pp. 75 f.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 70, 71, 78 f.

7. Buber, *Between Man and Man*, p. 207.

8. Buber, *The Knowledge of Man*, pp. 79-85.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 71.

10. Macmurray, *Self as Agent*, pp. 44-63. (*Self as Agent* is the second vol. of the lectures published under the title, *The Form of the Personal*.

11. Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 27.

12. Buber, *Between Man and Man*, p. 212.

13. *Ibid.*, footnote no. 1, p. 213.

14. Buber, *The Knowledge of Man*, p. 60.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 61.

16. *Ibid.*

17. *Ibid.*

18. Buber, *I and Thou*, pp. 22, 23, 28, 29.

19. Macmurray, Persons in Relation, pp. 80-82.

20. Ibid., pp. 33-43.

21. John Macmurray, Religion, Art and Science (Liverpool University Press, 1961), p. 27.

22. Ibid., p. 42. Macmurray uses "art" in a sense which includes a wide range of possible arts, such as painting, architecture, sculpture, music, dancing, poetry, drama, prose, and other literature.

23. Ibid., pp. 55-56; Persons in Relation, pp. 83-85.

24. This German phrase is not easily translated. In a letter of 6th December, 1957, Buber told Professor R. Gregor Smith that it means "spirit in phenomenal forms." (Martin Buber, Carey Kingsgate, 1966, p. 16, footnote no. 19) And from the Postscript of I and Thou (October, 1957) we can deduce that these forms are a response of our inner life to the spirit that meets us as Otherness. (Charles Scribner's Sons, p. 129) From the examples given in I and Thou it seems admissible to conclude that "spirit in phenomenal forms" includes, at least, any artistic production or any piece of literature either before or after it has received expression. In the present chapter this is the particular meaning given to Geistige Wesenheiten although its total scope of reference surely is not exhausted by that definition.

25. Buber, I and Thou, pp. 102, 103.

26. Ibid., p. 131.

27. Ibid., p. 6.

28. Ibid., pp. 124, 125.

29. Ibid., p. 126.

30. Alfred North Whitehead, Process and Reality. An Essay in Cosmology (New York: MacMillan Co., 1929), pp. 127-197.

31. Buber, I and Thou, p. 126.

32. Ibid.

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Ibid.*

35. Maurice S. Friedman, *Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1955), p. 170.

36. Buber, *The Knowledge of Man*, p. 66.

37. Buber, *Between Man and Man*, pp. 25, 26.

38. Buber, *The Knowledge of Man*, p. 66.

39. Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 128.

40. *Ibid.*

41. Refer to above footnote no. 24.

42. Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 6; the German text reads:

    ". . . Aus jedem vernehmen wir ein Wehen von ihm, in jedem Du reden wir das ewige an, in jeder Sphäre nach ihrer Weise."
    Das Dialogische Prinzip (Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider Verlag, 1965), p. 10.

Chapter VII: The Relation between I-It and I-Thou

1. Martin Buber, I and Thou (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 18.

2. Ibid., pp. 33, 34.

3. Ibid., pp. 9, 98-100.

4. Martin Buber, Eclipse of God (Harper Torchbook, 1957), p. 128.

5. Buber, I and Thou, p. 44.

6. Ibid., p. 46.

7. Ibid., p. 44.

8. Ibid., p. 45.

9. Ibid., p. 46.

10. Ibid., p. 81.

11. Ibid., p. 45.

12. Martin Buber, Between Man and Man (Collins, The Fontana Library, 1961), p. 27.

13. Ibid., p. 59.

14. Buber, I and Thou, p. 45.

15. Ibid., pp. 45-51.

16. Buber, Between Man and Man, pp. 53-59.

17. Buber, I and Thou, p. 45.

18. Ibid., pp. 50, 51.

19. John Macmurray, Persons in Relation (Faber and Faber, 1961), p. 34.

20. Ibid., pp. 70, 83, 90, 91, 104, 107 f., 146, 175, 178, 188, 209, 217, 222.

21. W. Taylor Stevenson, "I-Thou and I-It: an Attempted Clarification of their Relationship," _The Journal of Religion_, XLIII (July, 1963), pp. 195, 196.

22. _Ibid._, p. 196.

23. _Ibid._

24. Buber, _Between Man and Man_, p. 37.

25. _Ibid._

26. _Ibid._, p. 38.

27. _Ibid._, pp. 125-131.

28. Buber, _I and Thou_, pp. 133, 134.

29. Buber, _Between Man and Man_, p. 49.

30. Martin Buber, _I and Thou_ (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1955) "Translator's Introduction," v.

31. _Ibid._, iv.

32. _Ibid._

33. Buber, _I and Thou_, "Postscript," (Scribner's, 1957), p. 123.

34. Buber, _Between Man and Man_, p. 40.

35. Buber, _I and Thou_, p. 115.

36. _Ibid._

Chapter VIII: The Earthly Thou and the Eternal Thou

1. Friedrich Nietzsche, "Joyful Wisdom," The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche, translated by Thomas Common (London: Allen and Unwin, 1909), sec. 125.

2. Martin Buber, Eclipse of God (Harper Torchbook, 1957), p. 20.

3. Ibid., p. 22.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., p. 97; also, Martin Buber, I and Thou (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 135.

6. Buber, Eclipse of God, p. 60.

7. Ibid., p. 128.

8. Buber, I and Thou, p. 100.

9. Ibid., pp. 100, 101.

10. Ibid., p. 81.

11. Ibid., p. 136.

12. Ibid., p. 101.

13. Buber, Eclipse of God, p. 60.

14. Buber, I and Thou, pp. 136, 137.

15. Martin Buber, Between Man and Man (Fontana Library, 1961), p. 215.

16. Martin Buber, The Knowledge of Man (London: Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1965), p. 106; also Between Man and Man, pp. 213-215.

17. Buber, I and Thou, pp. 37-72; also, Between Man and Man, pp. 50-108.

18. Buber, I and Thou, pp. 45, 115.

19. Martin Buber, Israel and the World (New York: Schocken Books, 1963), p. 50.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

22. Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 137.

23. Buber, *Eclipse of God*, p. 127.

24. *Ibid.*

25. John Baillie, *The Sense of the Presence of God* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 1-87.

26. Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 137.

27. Georg Simmel, "Die Religion," *Die Gesellschaft. Sammlung sozialpsychologischer Monographien*, Vol. II, edited by Martin Buber (Frankfurt am Main: Rütten und Loening, 1906), pp. 7-17.

28. Martin Buber, "Jüdische Religiosität," *Reden über das Judentum* (Frankfurt am Main: Literarische Anstalt Rütten und Loening, 1923), pp. 103-105; also "Vorrede," *Reden*, x-xiii.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 202-209.

30. Buber, *I and Thou*, pp. 112-120.

31. *Ibid.*, p. 116.

32. Martin Buber, *Pointing the Way* (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), p. 113.

33. Martin Buber, *The Prophetic Faith* (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), p. 171.

34. Buber, *Between Man and Man*, p. 36.

35. Buber, *I and Thou*, p. 118.

36. Noveck Simon, ed., *Great Jewish Thinkers of the Twentieth Century* (B'nai B'rith Department of Adult Jewish Education, 1963), p. 184.

37. Franz Rosenzweig, *On Jewish Learning* (New York: Schocken Books, 1955), p. 110.

38. Refer to footnote 24, chapter VI.

39. Martin Buber, <u>The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism</u> (New York: Horizon Press, 1960), p. 43.

40. Howard M. Sachar, <u>The Course of Modern Jewish History</u> (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1958), pp. 413-415.

41. Simon Noveck, ed., <u>Great Jewish Thinkers of the Twentieth Century</u> (Department of Adult Jewish Education, 1964), p. 168.

42. Buber, <u>I and Thou</u>, pp. 123-124.

Chapter IV: Martin Buber's Approach to the Bible

1. Arthur Cohen, Martin Buber (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1957), p. 59.

2. Malcolm Diamond, Martin Buber, Jewish Existentialist (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 64.

3. The following statement was made by Professor Buber at a small group in New York City, December 1951.

   "There are things in the Jewish tradition that I cannot accept at all and things I hold true that are not expressed in Judaism. But what I hold essential has been expressed more in Biblical Judaism than anywhere else--in the Biblical dialogue between man and God."

   M. Friedman, Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Limited, 1955), p. 257.

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8. Buber, Israel and the World, p. 98.

9. Buber, Moses, p. 123.

10. Buber, Israel and the World, p. 121.

11. Buber, Moses, p. 16.

12. Buber, Israel and the World, p. 98.

13. Martin Buber, I and Thou (N. Y.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 117.

14. Buber, Israel and the World, p. 78.

15. Ibid.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 79.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 80

19. *Ibid.*, p. 79.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 81.

21. *Ibid.*, p. 16.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 18.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 114.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 126.

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28. Martin Buber, "Myth in Judaism," trans. by Manheim, *Commentary*, XV (February, 1948), p. 565.

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33. Martin Buber, *The Prophetic Faith* (N. Y.: Harper and Row, Torchbooks, 1960), p. 4.

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37. *Ibid.*, p. 6; Buber, *Moses*, pp. 144, 150, 151.

38. Buber, *Moses*, p. 150.

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3. Martin Buber, The Prophetic Faith (N. Y.: Harper and Row, Torchbooks, 1960), p. 23.

4. Exodus 3: 17.

5. Buber, The Prophetic Faith, pp. 24-27. For a detailed refutation of the most important arguments of the "Kenite hypothesis" refer to Martin Buber, Kingship of God (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1967), pp. 27-36.

6. Buber, The Prophetic Faith, p. 35.

7. Ibid., pp. 35-42.

8. Ibid., p. 27 f; Moses, p. 48 f.

9. Ibid., p. 52. Gerhard von Rad makes a similar analysis and translates Ehyeh asher ehyeh as "I will be there for you." Old Testament Theology, Vol. I: The Theology of Israel's Historical Traditions (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1962), p. 181.

10. Buber, Israel and the World, p. 23.

11. Buber, Moses, p. 126.

12. Bernhard Casper, Das Dialogische Denken (Freiberg: Herder, 1967), p. 358.

13. Franz Rosenzweig, Der Stern der Erlösung (Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider Verlag, 1954), Part III, p. 16.

14. Martin Buber, Ich und Du (Berlin: Schocken Verlag, 1923), p. 129.

15. Martin Buber, Ich und Du (Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider Verlag, 1954), p. 113.

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17. Buber, *Moses*, p. 103.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 101; Buber, *The Kingship of God*, pp. 99-107, 121-135.

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20. Buber, *The Kingship of God*, p. 107.

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27. Buber, *The Prophetic Faith*, p. 57.

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29. Buber, *Israel and the World*, p. 129.

30. Buber, *The Prophetic Faith*, p. 59.

31. *Ibid.*, pp. 80, 152; *Israel and the World*, pp. 130, 131.

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34. *Ibid.*, p. 70 f.

35. *Ibid.*, p. 52.

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39. Buber, *At the Turning*, p. 53.

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3. Ibid., p. 9.

4. Ibid., p.

5. Ibid., p. 34.

6. Ibid., p. 9.

7. Martin Buber, I and Thou (N. Y.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 67.

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9. Martin Buber, Pointing the Way (N. Y.: Harper and Row, 1957), p. 146.

10. Buber, Two Types of Faith, p. 25.

11. Buber, Pointing the Way, p. 203.

12. Ibid., p. 198.

13. Buber, Two Types of Faith, p. 11.

14. Ibid., pp. 57-59.

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16. Ibid., p. 58.

17. Ibid., pp. 63 f.

18. Ibid., p. 64.

19. Ibid., p. 61.

20. Ibid., pp. 56-80.

21. *Ibid.*, pp. 96, 97.

22. *Ibid.*, ft. no. 2, p. 97.

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26. *Ibid.*, pp. 30-33, 112, 113.

27. Martin Buber, *Hasidism* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1948), p. 114.

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30. Martin Buber, *Israel and the World* (New York: Schocken Books, 1963), pp. 38, 39.

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42. *Ibid.*, p. 231.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 232.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 236.

45. *Ibid.*

46. *Ibid.*, p. 237.

47. Albert Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle* (London: A. and C. Black, Ltd., 1931), ix.

48. Buber, *Two Types of Faith.*, p. 14.

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5. Rosenzweig, _On Jewish Learning_, p. 115.

6. _Ibid_., pp. 111, 112.

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8. Arthur Cohen, "Revelation and Law: Reflections on Martin Buber's Views on Halakah," _Judaism_, Vol. 1, No. 3 (July, 1952), p. 253.

9. _Ibid_.

10. _Ibid_., p. 252.

11. _Ibid_., p. 253.

12. Maurice S. Friedman, "Revelation and Law in the Thought of Martin Buber," _Judaism_, Vol. III, No. 1 (Winter, 1954), p. 16.

13. Martin Buber, _Eclipse of God_ (New York: Harper and Row, Torchbook, 1957), p. 173.

    In this chapter all legislation, laws, rules, principles, and maxims suggesting a pattern of moral behaviour are grouped together as the type of formality opposite from spontaneous, unpredicable moral responses. This generalization does not mean to deny that the various forms of moral direction have special features. Yet those differences seem important to the point in question only once in the discussion.

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16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., p. 140.

18. Martin Buber, I and Thou (N. Y.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 136.

19. Cf. text, chapter 3, pp. 17-28; "Nature of Hasidist Piety," pp. 31 f.

20. Buber, Eclipse of God, pp. 58, 69-70.

21. Ibid., p. 69.

22. Noveck, ed., Great Jewish Thinkers, p. 290.

23. Buber, Between Man and Man, p. 143.

24. Ibid.

25. Buber, Israel and the World, p. 83.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., pp. 87, 88.

29. Buber, Between Man and Man, pp. 143, 144.

30. Ibid., p. 145.

31. Jacob B. Agus, Modern Philosophies of Judaism (New York: Behrman's Jewish Book House, 1941), p. 335.

32. Ibid., p. 328.

33. Ibid., p. 329.

34. Noveck, ed., Great Jewish Thinkers, p. 268.

35. Mordecai M. Kaplan, Questions Jews Ask (New York: Reconstructionist Press, 1956), pp. 82-85.

36. Buber, Between Man and Man, p. 104.

37. Ibid., p. 103.

38. Ibid., pp. 103, 144.

39. Buber, Israel and the World, p. 83.

40. Martin Buber, "Der Geist der Orients und das Judentum" and "Jüdische Religosität," Reden über das Judentum (Frankfurt am Main: Rütten & Loening, 1923), pp. 81-84, 103-113.

41. Buber, Reden, pp. 65, 71; also Daniel (N. Y.: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), p. 95.

42. Buber, I and Thou, p. 39.

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44. Noveck, ed., Great Jewish Thinkers, p. 94.

45. Abraham Isaac Kuk, Banner of Jerusalem, trans. and edited by Agus (New York: Block Publishing Co., 1946), pp. 198, 199.

46. Noveck, ed., Contemporary Jewish Thought: A Reader (B'nai B'rith Department on Adult Jewish Education, 1963), pp. 223, 224.
Note on the Lehrhaus: "The Jewish House of Study (Freies Jüdisches Lehrhaus) was established in Frankfort on the Main in the year 1920 under the leadership of Franz Rosenzweig. It aimed at a renascence of Jewish learning. Soon the Lehrhaus became the intellectual centre of the Frankfort Jewish community, exerting a strong influence in Jewish cultural life in Germany. The events of the year 1933 brought about an expansion of the program and an intensification of the Lehrhaus movement, which was then headed by Martin Buber." Editor's note in Israel and the World, p. 137.

47. Buber, Israel and the World, p. 13.

48. Martin Buber, Kingship of God (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1967), p. 109.

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3. Ibid., p. 118.

4. Ibid., p. 119.

5. Sachar, Modern Jewish History, pp. 263-264.

6. Buber, Israel and Palestine, p. 122.

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14. Martin Buber, Israel and the World (New York: Schocken Books, 1963), p. 251.

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17. Martin Buber, Hasidism and Modern Man (New York: Horizon Press, 1958), pp. 57, 58.

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19. *Ibid.*, pp. 372-376.

20. Buber, *Israel and the World*, p. 240.

21. *Ibid.*

22. *Ibid.*, p. 242.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 244.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 241-251.

25. Buber, *Israel and Palestine*, pp. 3-33.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

27. *Ibid.*, pp. 54-161.

28. Buber, *Israel and the World*, p. 156.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 159.

30. Kohn, *Martin Buber*, pp. 20-22.

31. Martin Buber, *Pointing the Way* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1957), p. 119.

32. *Ibid.*

33. Buber, *Israel and the World*, p. 248.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 221.

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 197-213.

36. *Ibid.*, pp. 251-252.

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1. Martin Buber, Gemeinschaft, Vol. II of Worte an die Zeit (Munich: Drieländerverlag, 1919), pp. 7-26.

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17. Ibid., pp. 17-18.

18. Ibid., pp. 19-24.

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27. *Ibid.*, p. 47.

28. Buber, *Pointing the Way*, p. 174.

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33. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

34. Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 196.

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6. Ibid., pp. 209-210.

7. Tillich, Christianity and Encounter of World Religions, p. 47.

8. Ibid., pp. 46-51.

9. Ibid., p. 92.

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11. Cf. text, p. 44 (footnote 23) and p. 28 (footnote 27).

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